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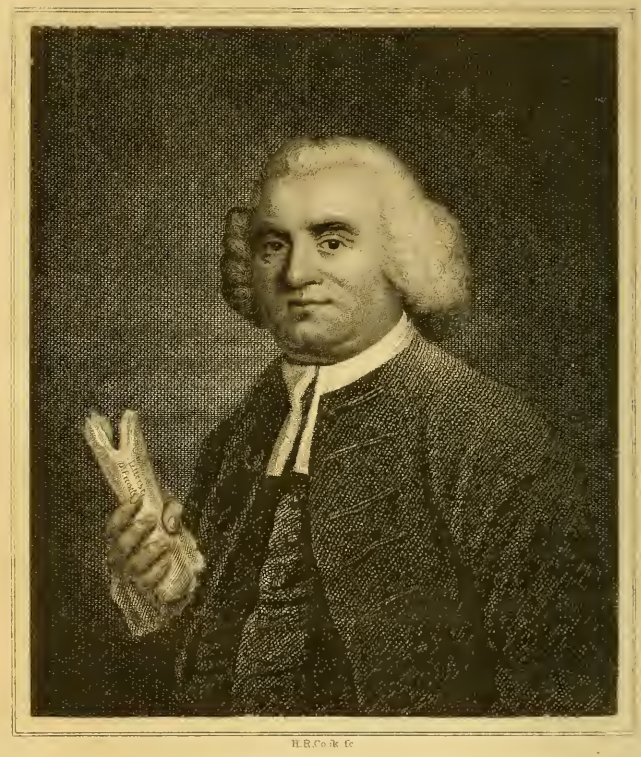

H.R.Cook fc

THE REV. JOHN MACGOWAN, F.R.S.

Late Minister of the Gospel, Devonshire Square,

LONDON.

THE

WORKS

OF THE

REV. JOHN MACGOWAN:

ILLUSTRATED

WITH A PORTRAIT.

COMPLETE IN TWO VOLUMES:

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INFERNAL CONFERENCE;

OR

DIALOGUES OF DEVILS,

ON THE MANY

VICES WHICH ABOUND

IN

THE CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS WORLD.

INTRODUCTION.

NOTHING can be more various and opposite than the opinions of mankind, respecting the influence and agency of infernal spirits. Some continually throw the blame of their vices upon the poor devil;—take their word for it, and they are on all occasions the innocent dupes to his subtilty and malice: they represent him as the prime agent in all their complicated scenes of wickedness; and would fain persuade us, that so far from being the objects of our just aversion, they deserve our commiseration and pity. From such representations one would be tempted to think, that if malicious and busy devils did but stay in their own country, mankind would be as harmless as lambs, and every species of wickedness be soon banished from our then agreeable world.

Others there be who fall into the opposite extreme, and with all their power endeavour to clear the devil of the slanders thrown upon him; whether he hath retained them as his advocates I pretend not to say: but they tell you that he has no hand in all the wickedness committed under the sun; that it is impossible he should have any influence on the minds and manners of men. Nay, some go farther still, even doubt of his very existence, and are confident that all their wickedness ariseth from another quarter.

My mind, I must confess, was long agitated between these widely different opinions: now I verged towards the one, now towards the other extreme; and for a long time continued in such painful suspense, that I would have given a world to have been satisfied in a matter of such vast importance in human life. But at length I obtained a full and most convincing discovery of this very intricate affair; and let who will deny it, I am perfectly satisfied that, how-

ever justly the guilt of men may be charged on their own corruptions, infernal spirits do exist, and are fully employed in forwarding their wicked designs and purposes. Yea, I have learned so much of the art and address of diabolical spirits in this matter, that as I shall, I trust, avail *myself* much of the very singular discovery, so, from a principle of benevolence to mankind, I think myself fully justified, without farther apology, in communicating it to the public.

Know, then, that not far from my humble cot, there is a widely-extended, most tremendous and gloomy VALE, first formed, as is supposed, by some dreadful earthquake, or some other remarkable convulsion in nature. The confines of this valley, on the outside, are every where nearly level with the surface of the ground; but the precipice within is to the last degree horrible, insomuch that few have had fortitude enough to approach it. The ancient bards very justly called it HORRIDA VALLIS, and we, from them, the Vale of Horrors. This horrid vale has long been supposed, by the credulous vulgar, to be the haunt of infernal spirits, and some people imagine that it is the only place on earth where they freely converse about the dark designs of their mal-administration.

My curiosity continually prompting me, at last conquered my native timidity, and I resolved, if possible, to find an entrance into this unfrequented, unknown, and dreadful place.

But many months, I may say some years, were spent in this fruitless search, and I despaired of success. At length, however, having entered a very large and unfrequented wood, one side of which led to the very edge of the precipice, as I walked a few furlongs down a gradual descent, gloomy beyond whatever I had seen before, I came to a huge rock, all overgrown with ivy and moss. It had the appearance of an ancient ruin, somewhat in the form of a pyramid; the bottom occupied a considerable space, and the spiral top was hardly concealed by the highest branches of the tall and aged oaks which surrounded it. Near the

ground, by chance, I discovered an opening almost choked up with baleful hemloc and night-shade. At first I thought that this could be no other than the cave of some ancient Druid; but approaching it, and having with much toil cleared away the noxious weeds, I found, what I had long sought for, an entrance into the dreadful cavity.

Here my resolution almost failed me, and I was at the point of relinquishing the long-projected enterprise. At length I recollected myself a little, and resolved to descend into the place, though, as I thought, not much less horrible than hell. The passage, a little within the entrance, led downwards almost in a perpendicular direction; but its straitness, and the natural unevenness of the rocks that formed it, rendered my descent more practicable and safe than I at first expected. Down, however, I went, fathoms I know not how many, ere I found myself at the bottom, and from an easy opening entered the *gloomy vale.*

Looking up, I saw rocks upon rocks projecting over my timorous head; and I perceived myself to be within the most hideous inclosure that sure ever mortal eyes beheld. The vale being solitary and gloomy as death itself, I said in my heart, surely if damned spirits are permitted to visit the earth, this must be their rendezvous, and two to one I shall see some of them. I therefore observed carefully my retreat; and by several marks on the rocks which formed it, I hoped that, on any emergency, I might be directed to the entrance of the cave, by which alone I could return to the society of mortals.

I soon found that my precautions were far from being unnecessary; for I saw, by the feeble light which glimmered in the place, a form most frightful making directly towards me. My heart bounced in my breast with terror, and swift as a hare pressed by sanguine hounds, I ran to my little sanctuary. No sooner had I entered it, but the fiend stalked up to the very door of it. The hair of my head stood upright, the blood ran down my back as cold as Greenland ice, and I looked on myself as a dead man;

having often heard of miserable wretches being torn in pieces by the talons of merciless infernals. But as the hideous form attempted not to penetrate into the cave, nor seemed at all conscious of my being there, I recovered myself a little, and reviewed it with less apprehension of danger. At length, he espied another of his clan, to whom he called, and with whom he held the following dialogue, which made such an impression on my mind, that I afterwards recollected the most part of it; and here present it to the worthy reader. The name of this devil, as I afterwards understood, was AVARO, and that of the other FASTOSUS.

DIALOGUES OF DEVILS.

I.—BETWEEN FASTOSUS AND AVARO.

Av. So ho! Fastosus, whither so fast at this time of the morning? Be not in such a hurry, but let a kindred devil exchange a few words with you. Pray, how do you do, uncle?

Fa. Hah! my nephew Avaro—I little thought of finding you in the Vale at present. But I am glad to see you. Pray, how do you do?

Av. I thank you, Sir, I am pretty well, only tired with much exercise. But pray, where were you going in such a hurry? When I called to you, you seemed to outfly the wind!

Fa. Indeed, Avaro, I should not be willing to discover my concerns to every enquirer; but I condescend to make free with you, on account of our near kindred; and knowing you to be a true son of Belzebub, I can trust you with any secret. As for my present hurry, the occasion of it is this: The right honourable *Madame de la Coquette* having an inclination to a suit, of some fashion never before invented, was thrown into a violent fever, through the dulness of the mantua-makers, who could devise no *cut* suitable to her ladyship's desire. Finding her life to be in danger unless she was gratified, I was last night dispatched to Hell to procure a new pattern from the best artists there; and having got it, I was going post to France, to assist my lady's mantua-maker in cutting and finishing it: which done, I suppose I shall have a trip to London, to accommodate the countess of *Prudeland* with a suit against the next court-day.

Av. What! the courtly Fastosus become mantua-maker! I should never have thought of such an employment, for my part. You have *now* descended low indeed, uncle!

Fa. Indeed Avaro, your ignorance almost provokes me to be angry with you. But you need not be much so sur-

prised at my concerns with the mantua-makers; for I assure you, that I am so much admired for my skill in dress, by both sexes of the human race, that there is scarcely a suit of clothes made either for man or woman, without my direction. Nor shall you find a peruke-maker hardy enough to venture a wig on the block, ere he has had my opinion of it. In short, cousin, there is very little done, and, in dress, there is nothing done, in high life or low, but I have a hand in it.

Av. If I have offended, my honoured uncle, I humbly beg your pardon; I assure you, I said nothing out of disrespect to you: we all know that your spirit is princely, your monarchy great, and your dominion very extensive. But indeed I never thought of your being conversant with tailors, barbers, and mantua-makers.

Fa. Nay, nephew, I am not angry. Nevertheless, you ought to revere me as your elder and better, and not take upon you to call in question the truth of what I say. As for the barbers, they are a set of transformists established wholly by my dexterity; and but for my sovereignty over man, these transformations had never been introduced. Now the transforming trade goes on so successfully, that there is reason to hope very many will be at last transformed into the likeness and nature of our sable fraternity.

Av. Pray, uncle, be not angry with me, if I don't speak altogether as you would have me, for you know I never had any inclination to learning or politeness; and I cannot help expressing my wonder at some things you say. Besides, I am amazed to see you look so thin; why, you look like a skeleton! What have you been doing, or where have you been? By your looks, you might have travelled barefooted to the Holy Land, or crept on your hands and feet to Medina, and wept forty days by the tomb of our dear friend Mahomet. You have not been on pilgrimage, sure!

Fa. I thought, from what I had said, you might have known that I have not been on pilgrimage very lately; though I assure you, I have often travelled to Jerusalem and to Mecca, as a guide to those holy pilgrims. There is not one of all the bare-legged travellers who will stir their foot from home, till their good friend Fastosus is equipped in palmerian habiliments, to press forward in the van as their protector. Nor are these pilgrims my only vassals,

for the superstitious of all denominations have with one consent devoted themselves to me.

Av. Well, but uncle, I am sure they worship me with sincere regard, as well as they do you; and I either attend them in person, or pour my influences upon every one of them, in all their religious journies to Jerusalem, Mecca, or elsewhere.

Fa. It may be so, Avaro; but their prostitution to covetousness hinders not their devotion to pride: for I have conducted many of this fraternity to the supposed sepulchre of Jesus of Nazareth, who in their own opinion were made so holy thereby, that when they returned to their native country, they thought the earth itself unworthy to bear the pressure of a foot, which had trod the threshold of the adored sepulchre. These religious adventures (especially if they obtain some precious relics, of which there are great store in Palestine) generally lift them so far above their fellow-creatures, that thenceforward they can hold no intercourse with the common people, lest their supposed spotless garments should be polluted with worldly filthiness. Nor is it uncommon for these fantastical devotees to imagine, that by their journies to Judea they have gained considerably above the price of heaven. So that when they come to die, they have holiness sufficient for themselves, and a handsome legacy to bequeath, as a help-out to some poor brother who loves home better than the Holy Land.

Av. Aye, Fastosus, but then you may thank my brother Falax and me for your Jerusalem journies: none of them would have been instituted but through falsehood, deceit, and covetousness. And I really think that we did excellent service to the great Belzebub and the sublime port of hell, in imposing that cheat upon mankind. Though, by the way, one would wonder that the reasonable mind should be so easily deceived, seeing there is nothing in any of these pilgrimages that has so much as the appearance of religion.

Often have I laughed in my sleeve, to see the foolish pilgrims, with holy awe and reverence, approach a log of rotten wood, fully believing it to be part of the cross on which Immanuel was crucified. Oh! how have I seen them congratulate themselves on their supposed happiness, if by any means they had procured a diminutive chip of an old gate-post, from the hand of a venerable priest, with his holy

word upon it, that it was part of the cross! And to speak the truth, which you know I am not very fond of, these reverend gentlemen, have words and wood equally plenty; for when one log is sold off, they immediately replace it with another; so that this market will not stop for want of merchandise whilst there is a tree left in the forest of Lebanon. I would not, on any account, that the world should know that traffic in relics is all a cheat, by the help whereof my dear children, the Jerusalem priests, get more money for chips of rotten wood, than the greatest merchant in Norway gets for his masts and yards, &c.

Fa. By what you say, and I own it to be right, cousin, you and I must share the persons and divide the spoil betwixt us on the day of reckoning. You and cousin Falax have laid the snare very craftily, and I, by my haughty influences, drive the fools to it. Good Avaro, your game would not go well without my assistance; and while you and I continue to play into each other's hand, we can readily bring the two fools to meet, each deceiving and being deceived. I mean, we can bring the covetous fool and the credulous fool together. The credulous deceives the covetous fool with his money, and the covetous deceives the credulous fool with his rotten wood. Dear Avaro, our work goes forward apace, and we shall have them both at last.

Av. No doubt of it, Fastosus; for both the covetous and over-credulous are ours by common consent. Our game could not well go better than it doth at present, for all ranks and degrees of people are subjected to our potent sway. No doubt but you have heard of that noble piece of architecture called the triple-crown, which I and my brother Falax made for our very worthy friend and steadfast ally the Pope of Rome?

Fa. Heard of it! surely I have; was not I the principal person concerned in the work? But, Avaro, you have an ugly way of denying people the due honours of their labour. But for me, his holiness would never have thought of such an invention. And as I had the principal hand in it, I aver, that the best mathematician in hell could not have invented a more excellent piece. I have thought, ever since, that the artful Falax acted his part with as much dexterity in the formation of that capital ornament, as when he and we assisted our venerable friend Mahomet in

composing the Alcoran. But the chief beauty of it was, to see our hoary friend the pope, with greater confidence than if he had been one of ourselves, exalt his papal chair above all that is called God. So that now, in the sense of the Romish impostor, saving and damning depend no longer on the justice and mercy of the Eternal, but upon the will and pleasure of him who fills the infallible chair.

Were we any thing but devils, whose hatred to Truth is implacable, it would have grieved us to see how she sighed and sobbed, as if her heart would break, when the impostor assumed the character of infallibility. She knocked with violence at the gates of the bishop's palace; but there was no admission for her there. She begged and prayed that the inferior ranks of the reverend clergy would receive her; but not one of them would suffer her to come under their roof; so that the poor heaven-born lady swooned in the streets, and there was none to assist her. Her eyes became as fountains of briny tears, trickling down her radiant cheeks; her locks were dishevelled, and her apparel hung dangling around her. In this mournful plight she went through all the streets of the mystic Babylon, uttering her lamentation in every public place, and in every concourse of the people. But as in former times she had piped to them, and none of the worshippers of the Beast would dance; so now she mourned to them, but none of them would lament. She stretched forth her hands all the day long, but none of them would attend to her; the venerable pope, father of the world, having published a decree that none of them should suffer her under their roof, nor administer the least comfort to her in her calamity, under pain of the rack, the gibbet, the wheel, or fire and faggot. Yea, more,—when his holiness saw the importunity of Divine Truth, and perceived that she would be a perpetual thorn in his side, if not timely and wisely prevented by forcing her out of the world, he clad himself in Vulcanian armour, sought for her in every corner of Babylon; when he met with her, launched his fatal spear with papal force against her, that, wounding her so deeply, she fainted and fell to the ground, and no doubt had died if she had not been immortal. When the most holy bishop had thus depressed her, he cried out in devilish triumph, "*I am the successor of Peter: the vicar of Christ: the pillar of Truth, the*

porter of heaven, and the supreme head of the Church." At which words, Truth entirely disappeared, and to this day has not been suffered to set one foot within the limits of the papacy.

Av. It was a noble enterprise; nothing could exceed it. I am persuaded, that the man who was in-dwelt by our brother Legion, and resided among the tombs, was never capable of coming so near to us devils in cruelty, deceit, and falsehood, as that same venerable man, his infallible holiness, hath upon every occasion.

Fa. Indeed, Avaro, Legion, though a many-viced devil, is but a fool when compared to his holiness; but it is highly necessary that he should be well qualified in devilism, seeing he is appointed Belzebub's great vicegerent in the Christian world.

Av. Great are the abilities requisite to such a station; and his holiness possesseth them liberally. Did you ever hear, Fastosus, the manner in which our Italian success was received by Belzebub the great, and his infernal nobility?

Fa. I suppose I have; but I have so many things to think of, that at present it has escaped my memory: therefore if you remember it, I shall be obliged to you for the recital.

Av. With all my heart; I assure you it is well worth your hearing, for thereby it appeared that his infernal majesty had the deepest sense of our services, and conceived the strongest hope of the increase of his kindom from the alliance formed betwixt the sublime port of hell, and the apostolic chair at Rome.

As soon as swift-winged Fame arrived at the gate, known by the name of Earth-Gate, she knocked violently, as you know is customary with her upon any emergent occasion; our friend Cerberus, the porter, no sooner saw that it was Fame, but he immediately sent a messenger to court, to inform his majesty and peers, that the ambassadress Fame was arrived. In shorter time than a lawyer could frame a lie, hell was all in an uproar, every inhabitant being big with expectation of some important news from our friends on earth. Fifty of the nobility were dispatched from court to congratulate Fame on her arrival, and to conduct her in state to the court-end of the city. The

mighty Belzebub ascended the flaming throne, to receive the ambassadress with imperial grandeur; and as soon as arrived, she was introduced to his sublime presence by Lucifer, prime minister of state, and in full court related all that had passed concerning the change at Rome in the system of religion; which desirable news was received with all the demonstrations of joy damned spirits are capable of. Fame having finished her relation, the mighty prince, who sat on the stupendous throne arrayed in all the majesty becoming his elevated station, lifted his warlike arm, waved the imperial sceptre for audience, and thus addressed his courtiers, his eyes blazing as burning furnaces, while he spake:

"My lords, my brethren in sovereignty and sharers of my glory; from the just sense I have of your steady attachment to my interest and government, as hath always appeared from your unwearied study, as far as possible, to destroy the creatures of our arch-enemy, whom, constrained, we call the Almighty; and promoting to the utmost our common interest among mankind:—From such considerations, I cannot forbear congratulating your highnesses on the happy turn our affairs on the earth have taken, by the indefatigable pains and vigilant endeavours of our worthy friends and genuine descendants, Fastosus, Avaro, Falax, &c. &c. as appears by the report you have just now heard from the mouth of our swift-winged ambassadress, Fame. By the industry of those worthy spirits, worms of the earth are wrought up to such a degree of pride and self-conceit, as to undertake enterprises that we, who are of angelic race, could not accomplish; yea, even to assume prerogative, which never once came into our minds. My noble lords, there is reason to believe that this revolution will prove a leading step towards a very plentiful harvest. I signify it, therefore, as my will and pleasure, that your highnesses take special care that the lodgings at the court-end of the city are kept in due repair, as henceforth we may expect, at every term, numerous shoals of popish priests of all ranks, to take up their residence with us; and you may be sure they will take it very ill, if they are not accommodated according to their quality.

"I think, my lords, it is worthy of observation, that all the missionaries we ever dispatched among the heathens,

could not prevail with poor pagan priests to aspire to that degree of impiety which the pope hath now assumed. I hope, my lords, that Truth and Holiness are in a fair way of being banished from the face of the earth: for I am persuaded, that this universal father, his cardinals, legates, and bishops, will exert all their influence to promote our interest in the suppression of our enemies." Having said this, a flaming billow rolled over the imperial seat, and so stunned the good old prince that he could speak no more for a season.

Fa. All those things I well remember, now you have mentioned them. But I want to know what you have got in that leather bag. You are not become nailer, sure?

Av. This bag, sir, contains a thousand pounds, which a certain attorney, a dear child of mine, wants to have deposited in some place of security, as he has not at present an opportunity of putting it out to generate, an increasing faculty with which all his other cash is endued. This same gentleman is a person of great worth, ready to assist the rich and great, provided always that his good deeds are handsomely rewarded. But so cautious and prudent is he, that he utterly abhors parting with even so small a pittance as a guinea, to relieve a poor distressed tradesman; and, indeed, for this very sufficient reason, that he cannot, in such a case, obtain land security for his money; so that if the poor man is ever so honest and industrious, he must even reconcile his thoughts to a dungeon, or seek relief from another quarter; for our worthy lawyer would part with no money to deliver him from it. His present fear is, lest any of his poor neighbours, knowing that he has plenty of money by him, should, by their pressing solicitations, over-persuade him to part with a little to help them in their distresses; for he, like many other honest men, is determined to keep what he has got, if one half of the parish should die for want of bread.

Fa. By your description of the worthy lawyer, I may expect his children as my pupils after his decease. I warrant me, Avaro, before their father is half consumed by the worms, I shall have them bowing and cringing to me as their god. I have remarked for some thousands of years, that when the parents have worshipped the god Avaro, by giving themselves up to covetuousness, for the most part

after the decease, the children have made choice of me and our cousin Profanity for their patrons. Surely, if covetous parents knew what courses their children would follow when their heads are laid low in the grave, and their souls still lower in hell, they would quarrel with the god Avaro, or die with grief on the prospect.

Av. Aye, uncle, but there is not one of all my numerous disciples who knows me by my proper name; and I am by far too subtle for them to find out the cheat. My English vassals, for instance, commonly worship me under the false names of industry or frugality, prudence or laudable care; but there is not one of them who can be prevailed with to believe himself a worshipper of the devil Avaro, which is, you know, my true and proper name.

Fa. Nothing equals our success; for you damn the parents by covetousness, and we damn the children by pride and profanity. Good Avaro, we have them hip and thigh; it is but a few of all the mundane race that we lose; and those also we should have, if they were not forcibly taken away from us: but this is one comfort, that if we must have the mortification of seeing any of the human race get safe to heaven, we have also the pleasure of disturbing and distracting their minds on their journey; and many of them we bring to the stake or gibbet, under the direction of our good friend Crudelis, who presides over those hells upon earth known by the name of the holy inquisitions.

Av. Hells, did you say? Right, hells indeed! One holy inquisitor goes beyond a hundred of our fraternity in the art of cruelty, which you know is the first of the learned sciences at Rome. Such wonderful inventions for torturing, one would have thought, could never have been contrived. What ingenuity does the rack display! How excellently formed for exquisite torture! What an apt resemblance of the infernal furnace is the dry-pan! A contrivance worthy the most skilful among the Belzebubian artists. But their watery torment, the gag and the pitcher, is what raises them most in my esteem. Almost every blockhead hath some notion of a hell of fire; but it is peculiar to the skill of a holy inquisitor to contrive a hell of water. In this, Fastosus, we must all knock under to them, for indeed they are our betters. And to enhance their merit, their

torments are inflicted upon the unhappy wretches who fall into their hands, under a shew of the greatest sanctity towards God, and pity to the unhappy victim of their cruelty. And so very strictly do they and their assisting familiars observe the rules of inviolable secresy, that the world can never know the hundredth part of their villany.

Fa. Secresy is indispensably necessary to a people so much devoted to our interest as the worthy inquisitors and the rest of the Romish clergy are. Were it known to the world what methods they take to aggrandize themselves, and support the papal hierarchy, the cheat would be discovered, the fabric would fall to the ground, the craft by which they have their wealth would soon be at an end, and their reverences be brought into contempt.

Certainly the great Belzebub will deal gratefully with the holy father at Rome, and his cardinals, inquisitors, and bishops, when they arrive in hell. For my own part, I steadfastly believe that if our good friends the popes and inquisitors are not served below their quality, they will be put in possession of the seats on the right hand of his majesty's throne, as our friend Mahomet and his muftis were in those on the left. And when their extraordinary merit is considered, our infernal nobility will have no need to grumble at their advancement; for nothing less can be deemed adequate to their uncommon merit and usefulness in confirming our dominion over mankind. And so fervently have they our interest at heart, that it would be very extraordinary indeed, if any of them should be lost, and fall short of our dreary abode.

Av. The basest ingratitude to use them otherwise, Fastosus. For my own part, I shall always give place to a pope or inquisitor, and I think it is the duty of all our sable fraternity so to do; for when their inferior species is considered, it will appear that they not only vie with, but even exceed, the most dexterous among us in many things.

Fa. I am thinking, Avaro, of the easy station you have got, in comparison of mine: you are concerned but with few, I am concerned with every one. You chiefly serve the higher ranks of people, but I am hackneyed night and day by all sorts of men, from his holiness the pope to the hermit in his cell, from the queen upon the throne to Bridget the

farmer's maid. But was it not that I find my account in it, and by that means am adored as a divinity, my princely mind would never submit to such constant drudgery.

Av. Good Fastosus, I speak it with reverence, but you are exceedingly mistaken in my business; I assure you, it increaseth every day upon my hands, and requires very constant application; insomuch, that for these twelve years I have not had time to close my eyes for one refreshing nap. Ah, uncle! I am concerned with, and for, many; and with none more than with the sons of the mystic Whore. This old bawd, with the scarlet gown, hath many children, who swarm as locusts along the face of many European countries, and eat up the good of the land before them. And there is not one amongst them who knows how to spend a day without my company. When I would gladly lay me down for a little rest, one or other of them conjures me up, to inquire after pay for this funeral mass, that dispensation, or t'other pardon. For, you may know, that with them there is nothing to be done without ready cash; for they never give credit.

Fa. That old proverb, "Money answereth all things," seems well adapted to the tenets of your disciples, Avaro.

Av. Wonderfully adapted, sir! very wonderfully adapted; for money forwards their devotion vastly, and helps them strangely on in their way to heaven. Dear children of mine I own them to be! for, notwithstanding their pretended love to devotion and the souls of their fellow-creatures, if a poor man, travelling from earth to heaven, should happen to be arrested by any of the officers of purgatory (who make it their business to waylay travellers), and be turned over to the tormentors; if such a man has not left a sufficient sum for purgatorial masses, and no well-disposed lay person is found to supply the deficient assets of the prisoner, he may lye, if it be possible, till he is burned to tinder, ere any parson of the convent will put one hand to help him out of those dreary flames. But, on the other hand, if a sufficient sum is left for masses to be said to the lady of Loretto, St. Dominic, St. Denis, or any other eloquent saint, all the parsons will apply as cheerfully as young dromedaries, and put their shoulders to the work like so many bulls in a yoke, till they have cleared him of his prison. You may always be sure that with them,

according to a well-known proverb, "It is money that makes the mare to go."

FA. I pray you, Avaro, where does this same purgatory stand? I have often heard of it, but never could meet with it, either in this or the other world, notwithstanding I have sought it with care.

AV. You have sought for it in the wrong place, uncle; you should have ransacked the brains of the pope and his clergy; for there, and nowhere else, the chimera is to be found. It is only a scheme to get money, that I contrived for them; and hitherto it has answered our highest expectations; for by this craft the parsons have great emolument.

FA. This I do know, that nothing is more attractive of the attention of their reverences, than brilliant gold; for the sake of which, systems the most absurd are imposed upon mankind, with the sanction of priestly authority: indeed, it is presumed that these holy men will authorize nothing but what is lucrative. O the wonderful trade of priestcraft! Indeed, Avaro, I begin to think you a devil of good abilities, and an honour to the race of Belzebub.

AV. I am highly obliged to you for your good opinion, sir: and assure you, that were you acquainted with the system of our government, I should go near to rivet myself in your esteem; an honour which I much desire, and, in order to which, I shall relate a certain affair which wonderfully displays the genius of priestcraft, and gives the most just idea of the doctrine of purgatory.

FA. I shall be glad to hear it another time, cousin; but for the present I must be gone, to forward my lady's robes; for the mantua-maker dare not touch them before my arrival at Paris. Exactly four hours hence, I shall give you the meeting.

AV. I shall think of the appointment, uncle. Success to your enterprise.

II.—FASTOSUS AND AVARO.

BEING acquainted with the appointment, I chose to wait for their coming, but was so alarmed at what I had heard and seen, that I lurked close in my retreat, not daring to attempt any discoveries. At the time appointed, I perceived them walking up the valley; and as they drew near,

FASTOSUS said, Yes, Avaro, I assure you there was great joy in the court of Versailles on account of my arrival, and that both amongst the French and English ladies; the latter of whom are the humble, servile imitators of the former; which tends, so to chagrin some, and give pleasure to others of them, that by this means contentions run very high among the French ladies. One part complains of the English, as no more than the apes of the French; these are they who would monopolize all the finery to themselves; therefore their censure of the English ladies is not to be regarded; the others boast of their superiority, and are not a little proud of their dominion over the fair Anglicans; who, they suppose, dare not attempt to introduce so much as the pattern of a head-dress, till it hath had the approbation of the French. But, to drop this for the present, Avaro, I shall be glad to hear the story you mentioned before we parted.

AV. It was this, sir; there was a gentleman in Provence, a steady member of the holy Roman catholic church, who died lately, and as soon as dead, his pious relations made his death known to their reverences the priests, in order to procure their good offices in behalf of their departed friend, whose soul, it was upon no ill ground feared, was hardly white enough for heaven, and would therefore be obliged to call at Purgatory for an effectual cleansing, ere he could proceed farther upon his journey. The venerable priests no sooner heard of the gentleman's death, than they prudently began to consult the good of the church, and what means appeared to them the most likely to feather their own nest; as this must needs be done, either by the life or death of the laity. This being their sole intent, it was unanimously agreed to refer themselves to my direction, and an interview in the apartments of the principal was requested. Being at that time in the neighbourhood, I immediately granted their petition, and presented myself among them, in the principal's chambers; a place very familiar to me. The reverend old father was no sooner aware of my arrival, than he arose from his seat, fell prostrate before me, to do me humble greeting, withal expressing the most grateful sense of my care and condescension, in coming so soon to their assistance,

Humble salutation past, the principal addressed me in

the following learned manner: "Worshipful Prudence," for that is the name I am known by among them, "we have an affair of great importance to lay before you; and with the profoundest humility will we thank you for your advice."

Fa. Nay, Avaro, if you talk any thing about that same humility, I'll not stay a moment longer, for I hate the nature of it.

Av. You need not be offended, sir, for the gentlemen in question have as little of that as your heart could wish for. It is not the nature, but the mere name of humility which serves the purposes of priestcraft; and which he and his brethren so much admired. And you know, sir, that the name, without the nature of humility, is nothing but pride in disguise.

Fa. Well, I am glad they have no more of it, for that Humility is a fellow whom I abhor; but I thank my stars it is very seldom that I meet with him; however, when he and I do meet, we as naturally quarrel as the elephant and the rhinoceros.

Av. I assured them of my assistance, and the old parson went on with his story: "Oh! thou priest-governing spirit, said he, thou must know, that about eleven of the clock last night, a neighbouring gentleman went out of this into the other world, leaving behind him an estate, upwards of ten thousand pounds per annum, devolving to an only son; and to this convent has left no more than fourscore crowns, for the salutary work of delivering his poor soul from the dreadful flames of purgatory. I do not know, indeed, but our great lady, whom we serve, might be satisfied with half the sum; but we, thy servants, are not so easily pleased. It is our pious desire to procure as much of the young man's estate, as by any means we can, for our own private use; as none of us can tell what we may want before we die. Besides, we do not know but so large an estate devolving unencumbered upon him, may be the means of ruining the soul and body of the inexperienced youth. Now we, as the holy guardians of his salvation, think it necessary for the good of his soul, to cut off as much as we can of the fuel of his lusts: well knowing how dangerous riches are to the laity. Thus, great patron, I have revealed the pious intent of our venerable brotherhood; and, lovely spirit, if

thou canst by thy advice serve us in this matter, we intreat thee to do it; for our eyes are to thee, and our hearts are open to receive thy instructions."

Fa. Who could have thought, Avaro, of any of your disciples being disposed to such exalted piety? However it was piety of the true Romish stamp, greatly admired by the venerable clergy.

Av. Well, said I, most reverend father, let not your pious mind be afflicted about the young gentleman's soul. Let you and your worthy brethren observe my instructions, and I shall undertake to put you in possession of the greatest part of his estate; which, as you justly observe, will greatly redound to the safety of his soul.

Be sure that you bury the old gentleman with as much seeming sorrow and devotion as might be expected from a well-paid parson; yea, with as much feigned courtesy to the heir, as if the deceased had left you five hundred pounds. Then be sure to say mass for him to your lady, St. Dominic, St. Francis, or to the saint of your convent, as soon as possible. That being done, let a skilful messenger from your reverences wait on the son and heir, to tell him that, alas! his poor father is got much deeper into purgatory than was expected, on account of some sins which he had concealed from his confessor; which sins, because they were hidden, will take a great deal of burning, unless expiated in time by frequent masses. Tell him that you are not certain, but you hope about two hundred crowns, laid out in masses to some favourite loquacious saint, may go near to procure his deliverance. This news will probably so surprise the youth, that the messenger will receive the money, and his hearty prayers into the bargain; for if he is a good churchman, it will not be easy to persuade him that your reverences only aim at picking his pockets.

Having received the money, you must take care not to go any more to the young gentleman, till the time that all the masses might have been said; then go to him again, and tell him that, by fervent application, you have at last got his father's soul within a few yards of the surface of the flames; that you cannot possibly restore him an inch farther till more masses are said for him; and that you think a hundred crown's worth more may, in all probability, clear him: this being received, take care not to visit him again too

soon, but wait till another quantity of masses might have been said. At a proper time, go to him again; expatiate much upon the piety of your brethren: tell him, that by their endeavours his father was quite discharged from the court of purgatory, and was just going to be turned out at the heaven-end of the town, when it happened, most unluckily, that there came up the soul of a woman, whom he had debauched in his life-time; that this malicious woman had brought an action against him, the bill was found, and the poor old gentleman condemned to fiercer burnings than before, which may last for many years, unless a speedy supply of money is granted to procure friends in heaven to intercede for his release. This scheme will procure you double the former sums; you know, father, hidden sins take a great deal of burning.

Six or eight months afterwards, go to the young gentleman again, and tell him that you laid out his last money to the best advantage, that with it you procured half a dozen of the best orators in heaven, to plead his father's cause; who, by their fervent supplications, had at last prevailed; that the old gentleman was delivered from his torments, and was led in triumph to the gates, to be dispatched immediately for glory. But, as his unlucky stars would have it, just as the porter opened the gate, there came up the soul of a mendicant friar, whom the old gentleman had in his life-time unhappily beat, and now openly accused him of this almost unpardonable crime; on which account he was remanded back to more exquisite torments than ever. Tell the young gentleman that this unhappy accident caused such grief to the brethren, there is hardly any one of them able to say Ave-Maria; and that some of them intend, as soon as their strength will admit, to go to Jerusalem, to try if by any means they can procure his deliverance at the holy cross or sepulchre.

You know very well, reverend father, in what tender and pious strain to tell your story; and, to make it penetrate the deeper, you can shed a few crocodile tears over it: if you manage wisely, you may, in this case, sell your tears at more than a crown each. Be sure thus always to find out some impediment or other to the old man's release; you may bring him often to the gates, but if once you let him go through, all your hopes are over from this quarter. Care

should also be taken to inform the young heir of the tremendous curses the pope has denounced against those impious children, who enjoy their wealth and ease, whilst they suffer their poor unhappy parents to lie roasting in purgatory, rather than pay the priests for delivering them.

Fa. Aye, Avaro! But what if the young gentleman should have sense enough to see through the villany of the parsons, and courage enough to refuse the money? How then, cousin?

Av. That was what I was going to tell you, sir; for, continued I, if, sir, young squire Great-purse should have sagacity enough to see through your scheme, and deny you the money, let one of your most devout brethren assume the ghost, from night to night haunt his dwelling, and in an articulate manner utter in the name of the father deceased, the most dreadful curses against his undutiful son, who possesseth a large estate in peace and pleasure, whilst his poor father lies broiling in the flames of purgatory. By these means you may procure either all, or most, of the estate to yourselves.

Fa. An excellent scheme! and from what I have known of those reverend worthies, exactly suited to their taste and principles.

Av. It was so, as you shall hear; for I had no sooner finished, but the aged father, who was not likely to live to say many more masses, arose, and with tears in his eyes thanked me a thousand times for my cordial advice; protesting that nothing could be better adapted to the end proposed, or more agreeable to the principles both of him and his brethren: assuring me that they would follow my directions as invariably as Saturn does his orbit.

Fa. By this account of the Romish priests, it appears that they are at no loss for merchandise. Purgatorial fire, holy water, masses, dispensations, pardons, &c. are commodities which do not require a very large capital, and yet are attended with considerable profits. The great parsons, over and above the tithe of the lands, have very advantageous craft by this means; but between you and me, cousin, it is all the merchandise of the scarlet strumpet.

Av. It would be dangerous to our interest, if the world should know the truth. Then our great vicegerent would be worshipped as a god no more; the wondrous beast which

ascended out of the sea of ignorance and error, would be torn limb from limb, and his carcass be given to the hawks and ravens.

Fa. So then I find that you are a papist as well as me. I myself have large concerns among the clergy, and with none more than his holiness the pope, the great parson at Rome; the parson of the parsons. This universal parson, though he pretends to be descended from Peter my enemy, hath conceived such a good opinion of my abilities, that he will not make a decree nor publish a bill, till I have put the finishing hand to it. You know, cousin, that I am none of those who are backward in showing their opinion, but readily dictate to all who refer themselves to my direction. As to his holiness, notwithstanding he is the father of the whole church, he is my humble servant; and, as I said before, consults me upon all occasions. The advice that I give, in general, is, that by all means he take care to keep up his authority over the consciences and liberties of mankind; and the same advice I give to the clergy in general: hence every parson attempts to reign within his own district, despotic and supreme over the consciences of the people, who are obliged, under pain of damnation, to honour him as the plenipotentiary of heaven, and the arbitrary distributer of blessings and curses. I advise his holiness at all events, to support his infallibility beyond the scriptures of truth, and his supremacy above the laws of God or man. This same advice I whisper in the ear of my clergy in general, who, to a man, agree that the Scripture shall not pass with toleration, unless it is dressed in the garb of their interpretations; as such, and only as such, it is imposed on their parishioners. The good old vicar never contradicts any thing I say, notwithstanding he knows, at the same time, his pretensions to be a cheat; but to the utmost of his power follows the directions of his adored Fastosus; and never did mortal man show more implicit obedience to the monarch of darkness.

Av. So then the papists worship his holiness the pope, and he worships the devil Fastosus. Is not this the system of the popish divinity in a few words, uncle?

Fa. It is so; and a system adhered to by many who are called protestants: for with such love to wealth and honour have you and I inspired them, that although, as reasonable

beings, they must know that the Almighty Ruler will bring their ways into impartial scrutiny, and judge them for their fallacious guile; yet, for the sake of worldly riches and honour, at all events, they resolutely follow our directions.

Av. Aye, sir, that is the heaven of the priest: they both seek and have their reward. The fat of the land is in their possession, and they are honoured as the directors of conscience. And yet they are the successors of the apostles, who had neither silver nor gold; and yet they are the ministers of Jesus, who would not receive honours from men. And yet they are the most humble creatures that ever lived; and yet it is death to contradict them.

Fa. Having made sure of the mighty father of the world, his holiness of Rome, to join issue with us in promoting our interest among men; I have an excellent device to insure all the other ranks of his independent clergy to our interest likewise. The patriarchs and cardinals are sure to prove loyal to the pope, and of consequence to us, from a hope which I have inspired each of them with, of one day ascending the papal throne himself. The loyalty of the archbishops is insured by the hope of a cardinal's hat; and their right reverences the bishops are sure to remain inoffensive animals, in hope of attaining, at some future period, the archiepiscopal dignity. The same device runs through all the other ranks of the clergy, and thereby they are all rendered my humble servants. By these things it appears that we are likely to have a very plentiful harvest.

Av. Doubt it not, Fastosus. Belzebub's regions will be well provided with gentlemen in holy orders, who are so dexterous in managing the cheat, that it is carried on unperceived by their adorers.—Look ye, Fastosus! who comes? It is Crudelis! Where do you think that deformed spirit can be going now?

Fa. He is on the scent of blood, I warrant him. By his nature, he might have been got by a panther, and nursed by a mountain bear.

Av. Let us call him, sir; perhaps we may learn some news of him. So, ho! Crudelis, what, not a word with you?

Cr. Hah, gentlemen! are you here? I did not think of meeting with you, my dear friends and fellow-destroyers. How do you do, Fastosus? and how do you, Avaro?

Both. We are pretty well, cousin; only jaded a little

with constant application to business. But pray, Crudelis, how have you been employed of late?

Cr. Employed, do you say? never fear me. I have not been idle, I assure you. Do you suppose that I can pick up no game in Britain in this golden age? If you do, you are greatly mistaken. It is true, that some of the late kings of England have been my avowed enemies, and, as far as in them lay, have expelled me the kingdom. But be they as vigilant as they will, I find opportunity of breaking through the fences which they have reared against me: when you may be sure, if I cannot great, I pick up small game; of which I only give you a very small specimen at present. In one place, I persuade an ambitious child to poison, or otherwise kill, an old cumbersome parent, who will not die without violent measures. I prevail with a rogue, in another place, to dispatch his woman and her brat, to preserve his own reputation and estate. In a third, I stir up an ambitious servant to kill and plunder his master; and frequently I can prevail with one gentleman to kill another in a duel, on some punctilio of false honour. And sometimes, I persuade the despairing wretch to lay violent hands on himself, destroy his own miserable life, and, by doing so, enter upon another infinitely more miserable. Then I take to my heels, and am followed with a hue and cry all over the nation. But thank you, I am too swift for them all: I never give them time to say, "Crudelis is here;" but they often say, "these are the tricks of that horrid devil, Crudelis."

Yesterday I was attending a duel, which I myself stirred up (as I suppose you know that all duels are of my instigation); so it was here, I persuaded the gentlemen combatants to fight with sword and pistol, hoping that both would have fallen in the action. But though my design was good, as ill-luck would have it, it miscarried, and only one of them bit the ground; however, I am not without hope that the other will be hanged for the murder, and, if so, then I have my design. I assure you, gentlemen, I use my utmost endeavours to throng the nether regions. O, my brother destroyers! I could tell you such stories as would make you bless yourselves, and adore the prince Crudelis. These are but trifling things, thrown in to whet your appetite against the next opportunity: then you shall hear. But

for this time I must be going. Adieu, gentry, for I smell blood at a distance.

Fa. It is amazing what power this deformed fiend hath obtained over mankind: what ills, so very different from the principles of humanity, that he hath by his bar-insinuations introduced. What is very surprising, he hath made mankind more cruel to one another, than we infernal spirits are among ourselves. He stirs them up to destroy and devour one another; but we are never known to quarrel among ourselves, nor to make war upon our own race: be that the part of foolish man; we devils are masters of better policy. This very Crudelis himself, sanguine as he is to devour blinded mortals, lays aside all his voracity when he joins our black assembly, and is as tame a devil as any of us. Well may you and I destroy with success, when such a deformed lump of hell as Crudelis is made welcome among them.

Av. But with your leave, sir, as Crudelis is gone, let us resume our discourse. I remember, before he interrupted us, you briefly hinted that you were somewhat addicted to religion, and that you are a papist too. I was never wont to consider you as a religious devil, much less did I think that you assumed to yourself any of those distinctions, which divide the professedly Christian world. I thought formerly, that the great Fastosus had dwelt only in kings' courts, with people of soft raiment, and occasionally waited on the nobility and gentry, at their country-seats. What, the devil Fastosus a papist too?

Fa. In reality, Avaro (to make use of a human phrase), your ignorance is enough to provoke the very devil. Do not you know yet, that if I were not Jack of all trades and religions, I could never maintain my sway over men as I do? I have very great concern in religious matters, I assure you, and that among more denominations than some people like to hear of. Sometimes I am among the pagans worshipped as an arch-flamin, and president of all their religious orders. Very frequently I have the honour of filling the papal chair; then I am adored under the venerable names of Pius, Innocent, Benedict, &c.; accounted the universal pastor, head of the church, and father of the whole world. Occasionally, I sit as judge in the holy inquisitive tribunal, where Concupiscentia and I are adored

as divinities. Now I am a holy mussulman, and stiled, his reverence mufti Muly Alab. Then, before you are aware, I am shut up in a cloister with the nuns and friars, whom I make more proud of their pretended chastity than a thousand saints are of their real graces; on such occasions, I am known by the name of the venerable matron Humility. It happens, also, that I am obliged to metamorphose myself into a capuchin, or a Palmerian friar, and in that show of self denial I beg my bread from door to door. By these means I teach the fantastical devotees to be more proud of their awkward form and voluntary humility, than a wise earl would be of all his landgraviate. Anon, I change my station, and find myself an abbot of a convent, where my depending priests and brethren worship me under the name of the holy father. Then, very soon after, you will find me attending the worthy confessor in his visitation, when, to be sure, I persuade his self-conceited reverence that he is well nigh as pure as the most holy mother pope Joan, a fortunate lady, who a few centuries ago became head of the church, and mother of the whole world. The hermit, in his cell, on the mountains of Ararat, frequently offers his adorations to me, and for my part, in return for his obsequiousness, I am in nowise sparing of my exalting influence. I persuade the world-abdicating wretch, that his solitary residence in that holy asylum, far more than merits a mansion in heaven, and at his peril that he stir not one foot from thence, to go down into an ungodly world: the mountain top, or a cell in the desert, being the best place imaginable in which to merit everlasting glory. The worthy hermit admits my doctrine to be true, his favourite passion is gratified, and he obeys implicitly my directions.

Av. Then his eremitical reverence never questions the goodness of his heart, I perceive. He knows not that he carries a spring of iniquity within himself, even to the desert, or the mountain's top?

Fa. No, no, he fears no evil from within. If he gets to a distance remote enough from the rest of mankind, he can repose the greatest confidence in his own heart; and thereby proclaims his folly to all the world. I assure him that, if he will remain during life in his cell, when he comes to die he will have holiness sufficient for himself;

and a large redundancy, by which he may help some poor friend out of purgatory.

Av. Hey day! how different was Paul's doctrine from yours and the hermit's, Fastosus! He asserted that by the works of the law no flesh living should be justified; but you and he believe that by the works of the law a man may be more than justified. Yea, that by observing of things nowhere commanded in the law, such as forsaking society, counting beads, and mumbling prayers, he may not only justify himself, but help another to justification.

Fa. Ay, Avaro, the hermit believes so; but for my part I believe no such thing. I know better, though I thus delude him. But, to pass on with my story, I can tell you I have a good deal of employment among your disciples, cousin, and with them I work wonders of compelled generosity. I meet with many who never had the heart to perform one virtuous benevolent action whilst health continued, who, when they perceive that they must come to a reckoning in the other world, are very assiduous to have their accounts balanced aforehand. I persuade them to leave a massy sum to this hospital, to the other parish, or to certain meeting-houses. When I thus direct the will of devotees, one leaves gold enough to build a chapel for our lady, a second doth the like for St. Peter, and a third for St. Dominic. But in general they are most fond of saints of their own rearing; the greatest part of whom are now made constellations in the nether sky, and courtiers to the prince Belzebub. Ask you me, Avaro, what end the testator has in those pious legacies? I tell you, by this time he sees that the manner in which he got and kept his money, has not the least tendency to save him from destruction; and he knows but one way to avert the impending judgment, that is, to leave his so and so gotten money for the good of the church; and that, he is told, never fails to sanctify every measure taken to procure it. Some of those deluded testators are not without hope that, in some future period, their names will be enrolled in the pope's bible! and their shrines adored in the Christian pantheon at Rome, where all the gods of the papal hierarchy are enshrined.

Av. Good Fastosus, I really think that, if the papists would act in character, they should dedicate their temples

to St. Judas, St. Demas, St. Demetrius, St. Alexander the coppersmith, &c.; for they are the genuine offspring of those celebrated heroes.

FA. Their very descendants, cousin. You and I, who know what we see, can discern no essential difference between the holy Roman catholic religion, and that of the ancient pagans. It was the most excellent device imaginable to introduce paganism under the specious show of orthodox and infallible Christianity. And I can tell you, there is no essential difference between the popish religion and that of some sects of very staunch protestants: but these things we must keep to ourselves, for I would not, for ever so much, our people should know that the popish religion is diabolic.

AV. I should be glad to hear it made out, uncle, how the religion of some protestants is much the same with that of the papists: this being well cleared up will yield me great pleasure.

FA. I can clear it up, Avaro; and shall at a time convenient; but not now. I must go and put the finishing hand to my lady's robes. To-morrow I shall meet you here. Adieu.

AV. Well, seeing my uncle is gone, I'll go and hide the lawyer's money in a place of safety, and return to some business which I promised to transact for my worthy children.

III.—INFIDELIS AND IMPIATOR.

THE way being clear, by the departure of Fastosus and Avaro, I came out of my lurking place, in order to make what discoveries I could in the valley, which I now knew to be a rendezvous for those evil spirits, who so dreadfully have enslaved mankind. I had not gone far, before my alarmed imagination transformed every thing I saw into a devil: the croaking of the raven was as dreadful as the voice of a hobgoblin; and the shrieking of the owl as terrible as the roaring of Apollyon. Every distant bush seemed to bear the aspect of some devouring fiend; so powerful was the influence of my imagination. Curiosity, however, had still the ascendancy over my fears, and I wandered from place to place seeking for something new.

At length, I saw at some distance, a tall gigantic form, slowly moving towards me; a form nearly as huge as the steeple of St. Cuthbert's church, at Dulmensis. Every time he contracted his extensive chest, he darkened the air with the breath which issued from his expanded nostrils, as pillars of smoke from the chimney of a fire engine; smaller streams of the same darkening vapour came curling forth from his arm-pits, and every other pore of his skin, so that, wherever he came, he blackened the air around him.

Now, thought I, my life is not worth two-pence, if yonder demon lay hold on me: therefore I ran with full speed to the cliff of the rock, where I had lurked so secure before; and having taken sanctuary in the subterraneous cell, I gathered so much courage as to peep out, that I might learn what was become of the terrible monster; I saw that he was got almost to the door of my cave. Frightened I was, you may be sure; nevertheless I comforted myself with the thought, that such a tremendous bulk could not enter my narrow retreat. He said to himself (his voice as he spoke resembling hollow thunder), "I thought I had seen the honourable Fastosus, and the careful Avaro, walking here just now; but I might be mistaken, or if they have been here, they are gone, on our great father's business no doubt. Well, seeing it is so, I will take a turn or two in the Vale, and then return to my business again."

Notwithstanding all the tremor of my mind, I was eager to know what he was, and how he came hither; but durst not discover myself, lest he should prove a devil of the cannibal kind, which, if he should, I thought that he would scarce make one mouthful of my diminutive carcass. But when he mentioned going to business again, I queried whether he might not be one of Vulcan's smiths, come out of the forge to take a refreshing walk; then I recollected, and asked myself, "If he is one of the cyclops, how came he to be acquainted with the devils Fastosus and Avaro?" I continued in this dreadful suspense for some time, till at last seeing one of his companions, he entered into discourse with him. I found that his name was INFIDELIS, and that of the other IMPIATOR.

IN. IMPIATOR, my child, how do you do? I am glad to meet my son in the Vale of Horrors, in so lucky an hour.

IM. Hah, my worshipful father, INFIDELIS! Am I so

happy as to meet with you here? my venerable sire, how do you do?

In. I thank you, son, very well; notwithstanding my great age, and hurry of business, I do not find the least decay in my constitution, but rather seem to grow stronger; and indeed there is a prediction on record, that I shall be strongest at the last.

What pleasure does it give me, my dear Impiator, to hear that you are so successful in ensnaring the minds and corrupting the morals of mankind, throughout every nation of the world. If what I hear of you be true, you prove yourself a right chip of the old block. I rejoice that some of all ranks and degrees of people are so subjected to your sway. I am told that many, even of the professors of religion, fondly caress you, my son.

Im. Indeed, sir, it must not be denied that my kingdom is in a growing condition, all over the world. I think I was hardly ever so much, and never more caressed than I am now. Even in pagan nations, heretofore remarkable for uprightness and temperance, I have introduced the fashionable vices of the Christian world: so that an Indian will drink and swear even with an Englishman; and lie and cheat as fast as a Gaul or a Hollander. Greatly am I beholden to a certain company, for instructing the eastern world in the learned arts of violence, rapine, and murder: not to dwell, however, on the conversion of the pagans to the vices of nominal Christians; much improvement has been made even in Christendom itself, of which take the following instances out of many that might be given:

It is not a vast number of years since your son Impiator was held in perfect disdain in Scotland; but now I have chosen many legions of the Caledonians for myself: I think I ought rather to say, that being quite tired of the service of Sobriety, a prince of another family, they made choice of me for their ruler. But you know, father, that I am no scholar, therefore improprieties in my speech are not at all to be wondered at. However, I have reduced the Scotch to such a veneration for my once hated person, that they have cordially embraced the ornamental vices of the English nation; such as sabbath-breaking, whoring, drunkenness, swearing, gambling, &c.; but whether they will be as successful in obtaining pensions from the government after

they have gambled away their estates, is not so easy to determine. The conquest of the Scotch, sir, is the more agreeable to me, because, as I said, there was a time when those vices were hardly so much as known in that country; now, who but Profanity in all their towns? Nor am I without my worshippers in the country, even among their presbyterian parsons themselves.

In. Glad am I that my lovely child has subdued the stubborn Scotch. For I well know that the presbyterians there resisted your influence long after I had erected my standard in the land, yea, after multitudes flocked to it, and swore allegiance to the great Infidelis. But how, my son, hast thou so happily accomplished this change?

Im. Really, sir, I obtained help from a quarter whence there was not the greatest reason to expect it: I mean from the parsons, the spiritual guides of the people. It happened thus: The persons of the kirk quarrelled among themselves, and divided into two parties. One of which forsook their mother kirk, and very solemnly delivered up the other party to the devil; on the other hand, the reverend gentlemen who abode in the kirk, in the like spirit of devotion, delivered up the schismatics, parson and people, to Belzebub. Belzebub, who, you know, is never backward in receiving a gift of this kind, finding that all the presbyterians in Scotland were thus in full tale made over to him, laid his hands upon as many of them as he could conveniently reach, and made such use of them as greatly assisted my operations. Little was now to be heard in the pulpit except railing, scolding, calling ill-names, and tossing anathemas from one party to the other: thus while they went on bandying curses, we went on persuading the people that religion is a farce, and that true happiness consists in present gratification; and this doctrine readily affecting the heart and senses, was eagerly received, and my government established.

In. It was a favourable juncture indeed; and I have often remarked, that if there was any turn of religious affairs much in our favour, for the most part, we have parsons to thank for their assistance in it, many instances of this might be given. But I pray thee, my son, didst thou ever hear of my original, and the nature of my government?

Im. No, not I indeed. You know, sir, I was born with

evident signs of stupidity, and therefore could never read; and, to tell you the truth, all my cares are in the present tense, without inquiring into either originals or terminations.

In. All this I know, my child. But as we are secure from mortal auditors, being in Horrida Vallis, if you can spare a little time, I will give you some account of my rise and progress; perhaps it may have a happy tendency to promote your destructive designs, and so strengthen the pillars of the elevated throne of great Profanity. What I relate, you may depend upon for truth; for although we seldom speak any thing but lies to mankind, one devil may well enough depend upon the word of another.

Im. Yes, that we may, sir; and I presume if mankind were to hear what passeth at our private conferences, they would not continue long so fond of our service as they are at present. As to your story, sir, I am ready to hear it; perhaps, as you say, I may profit by it.

In. Well, then, my son, you will observe that I am of very great age, well nigh as old as this world, which you see is worn quite thread-bare, and will in a little time be folded up as an old garment of no use. As to my original, I can tell you that I am well descended; of royal lineage I assure you. Great Belzebub himself begat me, and my sister Ignorantia, on Eve, the mother of all living on earth. When I came to years of maturity, he gave me Ignorantia, my fellow twin, to wife; and by her I had you, with your worthy brethren, Avaro, Falax, Crudelis, and your sisters, Perfidia, Concupiscentia, &c. At the same time my elder brother Fastosus, who had Insciontia, a lady of remarkable beauty, given him to wife, begot on her Ambitiosus, Contumax, Discordans, and their sisters, Malevolentia, Iracundia, and a large train of excellent worthies, famous in the annals of the nether regions.

As soon as I was born, I stood up like a stupendous wall betwixt the Creator and the creature, so that blessings of a spiritual kind could not descend from God to man, nor could obedience ascend from man to God. One of the first things I did was to maim their moral powers, and accomplish an union betwixt them and my great father Belzebub; such an union I did establish, as nothing natural shall ever be able to dissolve.

Im. Hah, my sire, you began very early indeed. You spent little idle time in your infancy; and proved very successful in your first enterprise too!

In. I have no reason to complain for want of success, I assure you. But you shall hear: The very moment I was brought forth, the great Belzebub gazed upon me with all the admiration of a father infernal; and said, that I was the loveliest babe his eyes ever beheld. Multitudes of his sable menials, flocking together, were likewise astonished at my beauties; such majestic grace displayed itself in my countenance, though then but an infant, that all agreed "I was father's own child." Moreover, such were their hopes of my usefulness, that great Belzebub and his peers did what they could, sparing neither pains nor expense, to have me transported to hell, to be nursed up at the infernal court; believing that my presence would greatly alleviate their distress, and prevent their trembling on the thoughts of futurity. But my constitution being altogether earthly, it was found by experience that the infernal air was too hot for me, and that I could not live within the confines of the damned. Earth, my child, only earth is my habitation. Here I was born, and here I suppose I must die.

Im. With your leave, father, I think I have somewhere heard, that all who are now the inhabitants of the deep are unbelievers. How comes this to pass, if the great Infidelis cannot live in those torrid regions?

In. I perceive, child, that you are no great proficient in theology: as for me, I have dealt against divine matters all my days. It is your province to counteract moral principles, not interfering much with things divine, and my province to oppose truth rather than promote immorality; therefore I shall inform you how it comes to pass. Know, then, that what a man is when he dies, such he is in the eye of the moral law to all eternity; for death casts the dye, and the same posture in which the tree falls it must lie for ever; but with unbelief they never more agree. For instance, many of them whilst on earth could not be prevailed on to believe that there is a God, but in hell they are feelingly convinced of the truth of this doctrine. Now they believe that there is a terrible God, and that they are fallen into his dreadful hands. Search hell through all its corners, ransack every furnace in the fiery world, and you'll

find never an atheist therein. Others whilst on earth were not quite so stupid as to imagine that this beautiful world, and all things therein, came into existence of themselves, and that the economy of nature is wholly effected by chance; therefore they assented to the being of God; but deemed it enthusiasm to suppose that this God should subject his creatures unto a written law. They sneered at the authority of the Scriptures; ridiculed every part of instituted worship, and gloried in their infidelity; but now they are sentenced to hell, and have had a specimen of eternal torment, they most sincerely believe the veracity of the Scriptures; finding themselves to have been judged according to what is written in them. Others, whilst health and strength continued with them, supposed God was only jesting, when he threatened the sinner with the vengeance of eternal fire; but now they are in hell, enduring that vengeance, they verily believe that he was in earnest. In short, son, many of themd isbelieved that there is either God or devil, heaven or hell; but now, all these things are certain, even to demonstration, with them; they having been driven to associate with the peers of darkness.

The very best of historical faith is to be found in hell; there are millions now inhabiting there, who, when on earth, could boast that they had good hearts, and believed well all their days, but who never began in reality to believe the report of the bible, till they tasted the sulphur of the lake. Then they believed very sincerely, though very much against their inclination. Now do you understand me, when I tell you that unbelief cannot live in hell?

Im. Yes; but you amaze me, sir! I never heard so much before. What a learned devil you are! The famous pope Hellbrand himself could not have discussed the subject with greater accuracy. One may see from you what it is to be conversant with popes, councils, convocations, and the clergy. But in our country all the conversation runs upon horse-coursing, card-playing, cock-fighting, fox-hunting, whore-making, swearing, lying, cheating, and drinking. Not a word about religion, unless it is to damn the parson for a sanctified hypocrite. And more, sir; I never knew that I had so many brethren and sisters before. Right well I knew that I was begotten by you, but I looked on myself as your only son by Ignorantia, my mother. Those

honourable spirits whom you mention as my brethren, I always took to have been sons to Belzebub, your brethren and my uncles. I should never have thought of a fraternal relation subsisting between them and myself in any other way than co-operation.

In. You have been greatly mistaken, Impiator; for Belzebub never begat a son besides myself, and my brother Fastosus, who is something older than I. I am aware that there are some, who allege that Contumax, Crudelis, Discordans, &c. are the natural children of the great Belzebub; but it is a mistake; for they are only his grand-children, sons to my brother Fastosus. The very moment that Contumax was brought forth, our great father Belzebub, with all his adherents, were cast down from the ineffable heights of primeval glory to the depths of bottomless perdition; and, according to a certain historian, were nine natural days in falling. Now my dear Impiator, by this account Contumax is your cousin, and my nephew. So that you are not only a brother in government with those illustrious princes; but sprung from the same famous ancestors with them.

Im. Indeed, sir, I am astonished at your story, but you know that I am no scholar, and that ought to excuse for my ignorance of matters so profound; besides, such things very seldom make a great impression on my mind, being quite out of my latitude. However, I should be glad to know how your extensive government was established?

In. How it elates my mind, to hear my dear Impiator express desire after instruction! I will inform you as far as I myself have known. My kingdom, which is indeed extensive, was established as follows: As soon as I was born, I began to call in question the truth, goodness, and authority of the Almighty, and in every respect set myself to oppose the Eternal, by contradicting every word which he spake to man.

For instance, when God said to man, "Thou shalt not eat of the fruit of such and such a tree:" although then in my infancy, I stepped up to man, and thus interrogated him: Hath God indeed said so? Are you sure of it? Are you not mistaken, think you? You must needs have misunderstood him, for it cannot be consistent with the goodness of such a being as God is, to forbid your eating the

fruit of such a divine tree. And as God had said, "In the day you eat thereof you shall surely die," I addressed myself to man after this manner: Die, too! nay, ye shall not die. This is only an empty threatening, to keep your consciences in awe; for God doth very well know that if you eat of that precious fruit, ye shall be gods like himself; having knowledge of good and evil: for this it is that he hath prohibited the use of this divine tree. My brother, Fastosus, also performed wonders on this occasion. By these means I brought over man to my obedience; thus I established my interest upon earth, and hitherto I have maintained it. With safety may I say that my good friends, both parsons and people to this day, love me as their lives, and at any time sooner take the bare word of the adored Infidelis, than the word and oath of the God of heaven.

Im. Why, sir, you began from a child to work the delightful works of darkness.

In. Yes, I am the oldest of all the Belzebubian offspring, Fastosus alone excepted, and I yield in point of government to none of the princes. Fastosus and I, indeed, have a dispute between us, concerning the extent of our earthly territories: I can freely allow him the pre-eminence with respect to his angelic dominions; but I can never be brought to own that his sway over mankind is more extensive than mine, nor yet more sovereign. I yield to none in this debate, for all men are concluded under my government; and what makes greatly for my interest is, the far greater part of them cannot be persuaded that I have any real existence. Thus it is, my dear Impiator, I reign almost universally over mankind, and they perceive it not. Many thousands of those good people who believed nothing of my existence, and who in their own imagination had believed well all their days, have I conducted very safely down to the dark abodes of ever-growing anguish; within which they were no sooner entered and began to taste of the entertainment, than they were fully convinced that they never had believed aright. It is the unparalleled dexterity of our administration that all our works are performed in obscurity. And let me tell thee, child, it will require a better light than any natural ray of the human understanding, to trace and detect our deep intrigues. Thus far,

with respect to myself and government: I shall take it kind if you will in your turn oblige me with some account of yours, my son.

Im. Yes, sir, your command shall be instantly obeyed; yet upon this condition only, that you excuse my inaccuracies, because I know myself to be the most illiterate devil of the fraternity, and cannot speak like the courtly Fastosus, the reverend Infidelis, or the intelligent Falax.

In. No apologies, Impiator; we all know that neither you nor your disciples have any taste for learning; therefore, we expect not to hear you speak as an orator, but as a plain illiterate devil.

Im. Then I proceed. My kingdom does not consist of all the land known by the name of Impiety-Real, as some geographers allege, several provinces being made over by treaty to my uncle Fastosus; such as the provinces of Civility, Legality, Presumption, and Formality. I reign openly, only, over the land called Impiety-Enormous, and in our country the laws are as black as the bottomless pit; for there, iniquity is established by authority. As to the rest of my kingdom, it was like all the branches of Belzebub's government, accomplished by subtlety and guile. For man, considered simply as a creature, could never have been subjected to my sway; for this reason I was put to my shifts to find out some proper method for introducing my regal power.

So violent was the opposition to it, that my brain was put to the utmost torture, and after all I should have been obliged to return to my native country, with my finger in my mouth, had it not been for the timely assistance I received from my worthy friends and relations. My good old mother, who you know hath an excellent hand at a dead lift, by means peculiar to herself, kicked up such a dust, as almost put out the eyes of one of the most vigilant and formidable of my numerous adversaries; a captain from whose hand I had much to fear; his name was Intellectus. From that time to this he hath been incapable of discerning my deformities, and the danger to which men are exposed by my dominion. And what makes very much for me, the old gentleman can hardly be persuaded, but his eye-sight is now as good as ever it was. I need not tell you the advantages that resulted to me from this his

deception. At the same time my worthy uncle, Fastosus, came up to the second, a sturdy chief, whose name was Volens, as tradition says, and he gave his back a most dreadful wrench, insomuch that he has never recovered his former posture. I myself took a poisonous, or rather an intoxicating apple, and having gilded it over with leaf-gold, presented it to the third, whose name, if I remember right, was Rationalis: it answered my expectation. He swallowed the bait, and ever since has called bitter sweet, and sweet he hath called bitter.

This triumvirate being thus disabled, I found my conquest extremely easy; and without any struggle on the part of the rest, I confined them to incessant labour and drudgery, in the different parts of my extended territories, where they are as content as possible with their condition, many of them believing they are still in the garden of paradise.

In. Indeed, learned or unlearned, you display uncommon merit. Great is my honour and happiness in having such a son. The potent Impiator will do honour to the venerable name of Infidelis to the end of the world. Well, my son, will you please to proceed?

Im. Perhaps you have heard that my kingdom is divided into several cantons, according to the dispositions of my subjects, each canton having its proper employments.

1. There is the canton of drunkards, out of which I select all my courtiers, and officers in general. This canton has several communications with all the other parts of my dominions, and this we call the royal canton.

2. There is the swearers' canton, a set of people the most unaccountably foolish of all my subjects; but a people very profitable to our government.

3. There is the canton of thieves, to which all pilferers, robbers, gamesters, and deceitful dealers belong. A very populous and splendid canton this is.

4. There is the liars' canton; these are a people possessed of two tongues: a people who have very much of the features of great Belzebub, and a very populous and polite canton it is also.

5. There is the canton of sabbath-breakers; here there is hardly room enough for the inhabitants, they are so exceedingly numerous.

6. There is the adulterers' canton; this is a very dark place, seldom visited by the rays of the sun. The fornicators cohabit with them.

7. There is the murderers' canton, the darkest and most miserable place in all my dominions; yet for all that, it is very well peopled. For here are ranked not only those who cut one another's throats, like the Alexanders, Tamerlanes, Philips, Lewises, &c., but also oppressors of every sort, cruel husbands and wives, disobedient children who break their parents' hearts; false friends, backbiters, and calumniators; indeed, all who wanton in the unhappiness of their fellow-creatures like corn-factors and carcass butchers: so that you see here are many inhabitants, and that too of considerable figure. It is worthy of observation, that all the cantons have easy passages from one to another; so that although the employment in each is different from that of the rest, they all hold communication with one another, as subjects of the same prince, and heirs of the same inheritance.

Yea, so numerous are the roads that lead from one to the other, that if a man gets into any one of my cantons, it requires no less power than omnipotent power, and wisdom equal to omniscience, to extricate him from a labyrinth so dangerous: and it is well for me that it is so, for some of my subjects are frequently terrified, especially those that work in the deep mines, lest they should dig themselves through the earth, and tumble into hell. But a little time discovers that their efforts to deliver themselves are all ineffectual; for the road by which they escape from one canton, leads them into another equally dangerous. Many ways there are to throw a man down into my mines; but believe me, if ever any one comes up again, it must cost the Almighty an errand from heaven to rescue him. I assure you, sir, that by the help of these subtle passages and intricate turnings, I keep my subjects enslaved with as little trouble to myself, as any master devil that ever ascended out of the bottomless pit. But, by the way, I am constantly employed in planning out fresh measures for the slaves to pursue. Oh! sir, the end will shew that I give ample demonstration of my fidelity to my royal grandfather Belzebub, of whom I hold my lands by fief.

In. My dear son, how it rejoiceth my aged heart to hear

of your wise administration! However infatuated your foolish subjects may be, the great Impiator lacketh not craftiness. By you, my son, shall my name be perpetuated when I am dead and gone. For I must die my child. As soon as the mighty angel shall sound the dead-awakening trumpet, the great, the far-famed Infidelis must resign his breath. Yet be not you discouraged, Impiator, for you shall live for ever. You know how I fostered you in my bosom, and endowed you with qualifications to sit on the throne of Profanity, where so successfully you reign. Permit me now to tell you that, knowing that I must die, I have, like all other wise people, made my will, and for your encouragement, I have appointed you, my son, with your uncle, Fastosus, your highly honoured brother, Desperando, and your cousins, Contumax and Discordans, the joint executors thereof, and sole heirs unto all my dominions and subjects, who at my decease are to be transported to the land of torment; there you shall reign in eternal triumph over them. Then it will be, and not before, that great Impiator shall arrive at the zenith of his glory.

Im. I suppose so, sir; for I am told, that about that time the provinces of Civility, Formality, Presumption, Legality, and Hypocrisy, so famous in the empire of Fastosus, are all to be annexed to my dominions, which will then be very extensive, and the government of Profanity very respectable.

In. I would ask you now, my son, for a description of those famous cantons you mentioned; but as affairs of importance call me hence, could not you favour me with an interview for this purpose to-morrow, precisely at twelve o'clock?

Im. I will, sir; fare you well.

IV.—FASTOSUS AND AVARO.

Being privy to the appointment betwixt Fastosus and Avaro, I took care to arrive in the valley time enough to hear all that passed; for now my business was left to shift for itself, and every thing gave place to the force of curiosity, which bore down, like an inundation, every thing before it. If my wife consulted me in any thing, I would answer, "Fastosus." If my children told me of their pro-

gress at school, I would abruptly reply, "Horrida Vallis!" When my journeymen or apprentices talked to me about the shop business, my answer was, "the great Avaro." And if they said any thing about my good friend the parson, I would say, "Oh! the wonderful Infidelis!" In fact I could think about nothing but the devils in the valley. Therefore I took care to provide myself with every thing necessary, and away I went to the Vale of Horrors, and had not long been there ere I saw Fastosus and Avaro come travelling towards me. And thus they began their discourse:

Av. I am glad, very glad, sir, that you are here so soon. I was afraid that you would find much business at Paris, besides finishing my lady's robes.

Fa. I did find more than I expected, cousin, for I had no sooner finished with the mantua-maker, than I was waited upon by a hatter, who begged to be informed, whether it was most genteel to fix the loops of a hat an inch and a half, or only one bare inch in depth; and whether a gentleman is most of a cavalier with his hat cocked in right angles, or with one obtuse and two acute angles? Before I had well satisfied the hatter, in came a gentleman peruke-maker, who humbly asked me whether a nobleman looks most like a hero when he has one, or when he has two curls bobbing over his ears. Provoked that the gentlemen mechanics should suppose I had nothing more to do but to cock hats and adjust wigs, I wrinkled my forehead into a most majestic frown, and made the following answer, "Get hence, thou sneaking cur! I have known a lord, before now, that had his ears so covered with tires of curls, that he could not hear the commands of his superiors. The brave princes Ferdinand and Frederic of Brunswick, and the noble marquis of Granby, will soon break through all the redoubts of a barber's fortification."* The words were no sooner out of my mouth, than I was sent for by his grace the d—e of C——ll, to inform him whether it was most graceful for a courtier to wear his hat with the front declining on the right or the left side of the brow. To whom I said, "Good my lord, you may soon resolve this difficulty, without seeking to the devil for advice, if your grace will only mark well to which side of the block the hats of the vulgar incline; then be sure to let the hats of the courtiers turn always

* This was wrote before the conclusion of the late war.

contrary to the vulgar method. No sooner had I satisfied his grace, than L—s desired to know which was his best way to keep up his character, and support his dignity in Europe, on the loss of his dominions in America: for answer I referred him to good Mr. Maubert, of Brussels, who hath as good a hand at a dead lift, as if he had been bred a priest. And so, cousin, with no small difficulty, I broke loose, and am come hither, according to appointment.

Av. By what you say, honoured sir, I perceive that, wheresoever idleness prevails, it is not amongst us; for we have no rest day or night, but go about plotting the destruction of mankind.

For my own part, I assure you, I have had but little rest since I saw you last; and so very fond are mankind of my counsels, that I expect but very little rest for the time to come. You know I was going to secrete a bag of money in the valley when you and I met. This was no sooner done, than I was waited on by a parson, who had his eyes upon a good living, with a view to receive directions about obtaining it. And he was followed by a tradesman who had a desire to make a profitable break of it, but begged directions how he might do it honourably: I referred him to the goddesses Perfidia and Fallacia for instructions, as they more immediately preside in that department. This honourable gentleman dispatched, I was attended by a certain curate, who having never had inclination nor opportunity to examine the canons of a certain church, came to consult me whether it was lawful to christen a child, if the parents had not money enough to pay the fees. I told him by no means; for if you once begin to officiate gratis, you'll have enough of it, and the parson's trade will be worse than an attorney's clerkship. The gentleman took my advice, being determined to seek the good of the church: and truly, because the mother had not two shillings and sixpence to pay the parson, she could not have her son made a child of God, and a heir of the kingdom of heaven!

Fa. Well, but cousin, is that matter of fact?

Av. Indeed it is what actually happened, not five hundred miles from London-bridge; and there is a certain gentleman alive who could avouch the truth of it, if he thought proper.

Having dispatched the journeyman parson, I was sent

for in all haste by my good friend the attorney. He, worthy gentleman, has undertaken a cause, which, he very well knows, can never be defended upon principles of honour and honesty; but his client is a rich man, can well bear fleecing, and therefore he could not in conscience put him aside. He knows exceeding well how to turn the rich man's cause to his own emolument, if he could but manage it so as not to injure his own credit. That was the perplexity which he was in, and what he begged me to clear up: said he, within himself, "Can I but get this cause to depend in chancery for a few years (which by the way is the highest point in law for a desperate cause), I shall gain some hundreds of pounds by it." As soon as he had done his duty to me, he very humbly laid the matter without reserve before me. Then said I, "My good sir, let not the suit disturb you, I will manage it both for your honour and profit, never fear me. Who is he that is employed against you?" To which he replied, "Oh! a very skilful man. No less a person than the great Mr. Falsehood. A very eminent attorney indeed!" Come, said I, let him be sent for, this was done, and the lawyer Falsehood attended accordingly.

Being both seated in my client's great parlour, the good man addressed Mr. Falsehood thus: "My best friend, Mr. Falsehood, you and I are engaged as opponents in this suit; both of the gentlemen are resolute, and will bear a good deal of fleecing; you know what I mean, sir. Now all is as yet uncertain, and the issue will greatly depend upon the measures to be taken by you and me; I would, therefore, good sir, that we make it certain. If right take place, it will be speedily over, and we shall make but a poor job of it; but if it is well managed, it may produce some hundreds a-piece. My advice is, sir, that it shall hang in chancery, like a poor man's soul in purgatory. What do you say, Mr. Falsehood?"

Mr. Falsehood replied, "It will never do, good sir: it will never do to bring it to a speedy issue; that is certain. But I'll tell you what we will do. You know that you have the worst side of the cause, and if I act the part of an honest man, you will soon be obliged to give up: but I shall act the part of a skilful lawyer, which will suit both of our purposes much better. I shall give you all the advantages that I can, in order to keep the cause depending, till the

patience of our clients is quite exhausted, and they agree to put the matter to arbitration. As they are both men of resolution, by that time it will be a job worth gathering."

So having set the two worthy lawyers to drink a bottle to the good luck of it, I left them, took wing, and came hither; but I can tell you, if I had not soared aloft, I had not been here so soon, for I saw a great number of parsons, lawyers, and farmers watching for me; I gave them the slip however, and artfully dropt my influences upon them. Surely they may allow their master sometimes to converse with his friends.

Fa. Ah! Avaro, when we subjected man to our powers, we planned out a great deal of employment for ourselves; for so fond are they of us, that they will do nothing unless one or other of our fraternity preside over every action.

Av. Sir, if it would not be offensive to you, I should be glad to hear some account of your origin, and of the nature of your government.

Fa. Avaro, a spirit earth-born as you are, must be too grovelling in his genius to understand much of my history, dominion, and operations; otherwise I would with all my heart favour you with the relation you desire.

Av. Well, sir, but I am willing to learn of you, if you will condescend to instruct me. However untractable I am among mankind, you shall find me teachable enough with you.

Fa. You promise fair, cousin; I love your submission, and therefore shall begin. Observe, then, I am of high parentage, as well as of heroic deeds. I was born in heaven, cousin. It was there that Satan the great archangel begat me, upon himself; and as soon as I was begotten, I in return begat him; and the very moment I was begotten, I was brought forth, and instantly killed my father.

Av. Indeed, uncle, you start high. You told me that I could not understand you, and now I perceive the truth of it; for really I understand not one word of all you have said: I hope, sir, you will condescend to explain your parables.

Fa. Well, if you understand me not, I shall descend lower, though indeed I hate to speak of my own affairs in a vulgar style, so as to be understood by every petty spirit. But as you, Avaro, are of excellent use to my operations, I shall stand upon no distance, but avoid all ceremonies with

you. Understand me, then; when God Almighty had created all the hosts of heaven, every angel was perfectly pleased with his station; the most solid and joyous contentment reigned among, and united the ethereal inhabitants, who were in those days very numerous. No one so much as wished his station altered. No one thought himself capable of higher felicity and preferment than he enjoyed. The adventurous Satan himself, though he has not been blest with one moment's rest ever since I was born, before that time possessed all the sublime and refined pleasures his exalted capacity was capable of. And well might he be pleased with his station, seeing he was a mighty prince among the angels, next in greatness to the Son of God, who was appointed lord-lieutenant of the creation. And a mighty prince in heaven he would have continued, had he not afterwards become a candidate for omnipotence. As for me, I was not born then; but I have heard old Satan my father, with flames of malice and indignation darting from his eyes, tell how the most perfect harmony existed among the hosts of paradise; till it happened that a declaration was made from the lofty throne, that the Son of God was predestinated at a time appointed, to assume a nature inferior to that of angels; and the Most High commanded that, in that nature all the angels of God should worship the Son, even as they worship the Father, and that all should submit to the government of the man whom God delighted to honour.

At this instant I was begotten in Satan's alarmed breast, and cried out, 'Tis enough that such exalted spirits as we submit to him in his present unincarnate state. But worship and submit to him in an inferior nature, let who will, I will not. What does he mean? Will the Almighty debase his first and best; and make us subject to an inferior nature? No, it shall never be said that Satan the archangel stooped so low! The great archangel's voice was heard, his resolution was approved of, the standard of rebellion set up in heaven, and many millions of angels, whose natures I had changed, joined it that day, and fell into the depths of bottomless perdition. Now do you understand me.

Av. I understand you pretty well when you say, that Satan begat you; but you say, that you begat him, and millions of devils besides; it run always in my head that God

had made every devil in the bottomless pit; but, if I understand you aright, you say you made them all.

Fa. True, I do say so, and I will not quit a hair's breadth of my just prerogative. God never did, nor ever could, make any sinner, either angelic or human. Mind well what I say, for I perceive you are dull of apprehension, and but of a shallow judgment. It was not I, but God, who made them creatures. God created them in a holy, pure, and glorious state, and endued them with powers to preserve their primitive station in the upper skies; but it was I, not God, who from angels of light transformed them into devils of darkness. The very moment I was conceived, I changed themfrom light to darkness; from holiness to sin; from glory to dishonour; and thus, though not as creatures, yet as devils, they are wholly of my formation. Do ye understand me now?

Av. Yes, sir, I understand you as to that; but you said just now, that the moment you were brought forth you killed your father. Great sir, these are dark sayings.

Fa. Aye, Avaro, to such as you they are dark; but I'll explain them. I did not mean that I annihilated his angelic nature; no, he is an angel still, although a black one: but I meant, that I slew all his primitive disposition to goodness; killed the life of holiness that once was in him; deprived him of the favour of God, which some people prefer even unto life. I made him that crooked, perverse monster which you see he now is. I opened the ever-flowing sluices of divine indignation, which continually pour down upon him, whatever he is doing, or wherever he flies; and not upon him only, but upon all his adherents. Was not this killing him to purpose, think you?

Av. Indeed it was. You had not hurt him half so much uncle, if you had deprived him of being. I wonder that he can endure the sight of you after all that has befallen him on your account! You have deprived him of every good and brought every evil upon him, and yet he loves you as his own soul. 'Tis strange! wondrous strange, Fastosus!

Fa. You'll think it stranger still, when I tell you that he is so far from hating me, that he will do nothing, either on earth or in hell, amongst men or devils, but as he is directed and prompted to it by me. And so far is he from

repenting of what he hath done, that he hath told me a thousand times, if it were to do again he would do it. Nothing grieves the heart of old Satan so much as this; the very man whose exaltation he opposed, whose sway he resisted, and whose person he hath still in the most perfect abhorrence, is dignified, not only by a personal union with Jehovah, but by all judgment being committed into his hand, and the public administration of all the affairs of heaven, earth, and hell, devolving upon him. Great is his torment, from the consideration that he, with all his adherents, must receive their final sentence from the same person, whom, of all beings, he hates with the most consummate hatred, and on whose account he hates and seeks the destruction of all the creatures of God.

It is a perpetual hell to him, that the object of his greatest aversion sitteth on the circle of heaven, and holdeth him continually as with bit and bridle; limiteth his operations at pleasure, and sovereignly appoints his licence by an unalterable determination. When, through confirmed malice and desperate resolution, Satan struggles for larger scope, Immanuel gives him a check, saying, "Hitherto thou mayest go, but no farther." And sometimes so severe is the check, that the prince of darkness is quite overturned, and whilst sprawling on his back, for very vexation that he can go no farther, he rageth, and roareth louder than a thousand lions, so that all the arches of gloomy Tartarus resound; then in the anguish of horrid despair, he bites his adamantine chains, foams at the mouth, and utters such dreadful blasphemies, as none but himself can utter. What is the most remarkable of all is, that the more rapidly the torrent of the Almighty's wrath pours in upon him, the fonder he is of me, the cause of all his misery.

Av. Sir, you say that Belzebub will do nothing without your direction; if I understand this right, it is not he, but you, who are governor of hell. Pray, sir, where are all his princely prerogatives then?

Fa. It is not fitting, Avaro, that you should criticise upon my doctrine: you ought to embrace it implicitly as I deliver it to you.

Av. Pardon me, great sir, you put me in mind of some of the modern parsons; for that is the very way that they want their doctrine to be embraced, implicitly, without ques

tioning its currency. 'Tis merry enough to hear them exhort their hearers to search the Scriptures, to try the spirits, to take heed what they hear, &c.; and yet after all, if any one of their hearers attempt to bring the parson's own sermon to trial by the Scriptures, he is deemed a troublesome, self-conceited fellow; and if he happen to disprove his doctrine by the Scripture, he is presently dealt with, and excommunicated as a troubler of Israel. For the parson would have other people's doctrine tried, and if false, refuted; but it is impious to do so by his own. Brave days, Fastosus, are these! It is quite laughable to hear the modern clergymen tell their hearers, that they have a right to private judgment, and to know the mind of God for themselves; and at the same time obliging them implicity to abide by the confession of faith already authenticated. That is, uncle, the clergy will allow you to controvert the Scriptures, if you choose it; but their own articles must have your implicit submission.

Fa. Well, cousin, you have fairly laughed me out of my resentment, by the droll conduct of your parsons. However, what I said, Avaro, I will maintain. It shall never be said that the devil, Fastosus, did at any time eat his words; but I will condescend to explain myself. Without me, Belzebub would be none other than an angel; but mixing myself with his angelic faculties, I render him a perfect devil; the same I do with all the rest of my infernal subjects. Belzebub himself is but a titular prince; it is I who instigate him, that am the great devil of all. To tell you more, it is I who formed hell itself as a place of punishment. Such is the rectitude and equity of his nature, that God never would, nor could inflict any punishment without my intervention. He was ever guided in all his works by his own perfections, and therefore could never have punished sinless beings: all beings would have remained sinless, but for me; so in making sin, I made the punishment of it. For if one sin is introduced, punishment follows of course; it being as natural for sin to bring forth punishment, as it is for the sun to send forth light and heat.

No being possibly can be a devil, but that being who is possessed and governed by me; every being thus possessed and governed, whether angel or man, is a devil. But, for distinction's sake, we ascribe only the plain name of fiends

to the angels whom I govern, and to men and women under my dominion we give the names of devils incarnate, because they inhabit bodies of flesh. The difference in the state of devils is not that one is less devilish than another, but their being possessed of more noble endowments, and more extensive qualities than others. So you see the devils of quality among us are more intelligent, more subtle, and crafty than devils of a vulgar race. The reason why Belzebub is head over all the infernal tribes, also, is not because he is more depraved than his adherents; but because he was originally created in a more glorious station, possessed of endowments more exalted, and blest with more extensive natural powers. As such, being once depraved, he is capable of excelling his fellows as far in diabolical achievements, as at first he excelled them in their heavenly station. The same rule holds good through the various ranks of my subjects. Were you to ask me, why it is that devils without a body are capable of exceeding in sweet rebellion those spirits who are embodied? I would answer without hesitation, "Not because the one is less vicious, or one whit less depraved than the other, but for the following two very good and substantial reasons:

"1. Although I reign and rule in the heart of every one of them, yet whilst they are in the body they are laid under particular restrictions by the Almighty; so that they cannot do all the evil which in their hearts I prompt them to do: and therefore they cannot be so much like Belzebub in their actions as they would be. Fear and shame very often prevent people from gratifying their impious and unclean inclinations, when a love of virtue, and the fear of God, are absolutely out of the question.

"2. Because the natural powers of man are very far inferior to the powers of infernal spirits. The more extensive a man's natural capacity, the nearer he may arrive to the stature of Satan, if unrestrained by the grace of God. Hence a crafty and learned pope is by far more like the devil than an ignorant swag-bellied friar. Yea, Avaro, the more enlarged the capacity of either man or devil may be, as it makes him capable of the higher degrees of wickedness, even so in proportion to the natural abilities of both, shall the punishment inflicted be. No wicked being is so capable of being wicked as the crafty and understanding parson;

who, if he is not truly virtuous and holy, must be truly wicked and devilish. Hence one Hume, one Voltaire, is a hundred times more capable of being useful to us, than fifty H–w—ds, or even five times the number of popish priests. You may take this as a general maxim, that the most enlarged soul must be the most tormented, if not saved."

Av. One may see by your learning, sir, what it is to be born among spirits. Why, you can converse as freely and fluently about the nature of angels and men, as I can do about gold and silver coin: great, great, sir, is your merit.

Fa. How should it be otherwise, Avaro, when you consider the subtility of my nature? I am the very soul of Belzebub, and all his vassals. Petty spirits may boast of their conquests one to another, but they must all be silent when courtly Fastosus opens his mouth. You, Avaro, Impiator, Discordans, &c., have all of you made as great inroads upon mankind as can possibly be expected from such unseemly spirits as you be; but as for me, you see I am a spirit of a comely deportment, and caressed by all. Indeed many people are now-a-days of opinion, that a spice of my nature is absolutely necessary, in order to make them respectable in the world, and prevent the injuries which otherwise might be offered to them. Nor is there any who can discern the fatal consequences of being under my direction, except those who are enlightened from above, by Him who was given for a light to the Gentiles. I lodge securely in the secret caverns of the heart, and from thence I convey my influence so imperceptibly through all the words of the mouth, and actions of the life, that you rarely meet with a man or woman, who will own that they have the least acquaintance with me; though with many of them, the judicious beholder will easily perceive that I am deeply concerned in all they do or say.

Av. Indeed I have often heard people declare, that they never saw the devil Fastosus, nor had the least acquaintance with pride. Yet, they said, a little spirit ought to be shown, that every one might know his proper place. But I perceive now, that pride itself is that same spirit which they deem so necessary, notwithstanding their supposed freedom from it, and aversion to it.

Fa. The very same spirit, Avaro, though they do not know it; for I deceive them at every turn, being capable

of transforming myself into so many different shapes, and bearing a name so suitable to each, that even when I lord it over them with the greatest power, they remain utterly ignorant of their subjection to me. Sometimes I assume the appearance, and bear the name of my avowed enemy, Humility; then you will see people of fashion, or those who think themselves such, descending lower than their station, for no other reason than to get a good name. At another time you may see me transformed into the likeness of Charity, and I prompt my slaves to bestow their alms, in order to be esteemed benevolent and generous. I have seen a man of wealth and industry perform such actions with this, and no other view, and he has made his poor belly to suffer for it many days to come, when at the same time he had his thousands out at use. Then I take upon me the name of Decency, and am greatly employed in regulating domestic affairs, descending even so low as to take cognizance of meat and drink, dress and company: then you may see madam extremely diligent in persuading Miss Prim and Miss Stiff not to be seen in the company of those of an inferior station. Ere you are aware, I have got the name of Good-breeding, and, oh! what wonders of fashionable civilities I work, and forward the great designs of hell! At this time you will see my lady, who having forgotten the fashions prevailing above twenty years ago, when she was under forty, is as careful as possible not to deviate in the least from the customs of them who were born since she was a wife and mother. Sometimes I bear the name of a spirit of honour: under this name I prevailed in ancient Rome, and now reign over many of our European cavaliers; in this character I do great execution among the British gods at the west end of London, where the greatest enormities are deemed excusable, but the putting up with an affront, an unpardonable evil.

Av. There would be nothing done in comparison of what there is among mankind, if we appeared in our own likeness, and went by our proper names: for there are thousands that love us extremely, while in disguise, who would be ashamed of us, if we went by our proper names of Covetousness and Pride. As for my part, I am fain to perform all my works in disguise; bearing the feigned names of Industry, Frugality, &c. But, sir, will it please you to

give me some account how you first made your entrance good amongst mankind?

FA. I have already told you that as soon as I was born, I obtained full dominion over the adherents of Belzebub; this taught the angels of the deep, that the only way to seduce innocent beings, was to inject my nature into them; and that the seeds of pride being once sown, they could not fail of most abundant fruitfulness. Man was originally created in a holy and happy estate, a perfect stranger to those evils which now prevail over, and reign predominant in, the natural and moral world. You could not have seen so much as one symptom of pride or covetousness, or other vice, either in Adam or Eve, in their primitive state. They loved without unchastity, and enjoyed without uncleanness: nor were they in the least acquainted with the racking torments of jealousy. No anxious thoughts, perplexing fears, nor distracting cares, disturbed their peaceful hearts. Envy, anger, shame, and resentment, were strangers to the new-created pair, and never set foot in paradise before my arrival there. Their sole delight was to contemplate the beneficence of their God.

Our eagle-eyed angels, when they saw the noble deportment of man, soon perceived that he was of the same nature which the Son of God was predestinated to assume (for, as some think, he might, out of love to the human nature, appear occasionally to the heavenly hosts in the form of man*); for the resisting of which decree, they were damned to the depths of ever-burning hell. The first discovery Belzebub made of the blessed situation in which man was created, filled his noble mind with such violent agitations of rage, envy, malice, and pride, that his fury burst beyond all bounds. He stamped and raged in a most tempestuous manner; insomuch that he shook the sable firmament of hell, and brought his confederates to inquire the cause of his anguish. A council thus convened, after the prince had a little recovered from the first shock of transporting rage, he related to them what he had discovered concerning the inhabitants of Eden: asked advice

* Some may think that this parenthesis is an impeachment of the knowledge of Fastosus, supposing that himself was ignorant, whether the Son of God did or did not assume the form of a man in his intercourse with the heavenly legions. But it ought to be observed, that this judicious devil is relating transactions which were antecedent to the time when he professes to have been born.

of his senators, who, to a devil, vowed speedy destruction to man. Some demur there was respecting the plan of their operations; for the impolitic part of the assembly, finding the smallness of their number, were for having man assaulted by storm; but the more sage politicians voted for craft, as the likeliest method to seduce them. At last the august assembly came to this unanimous resolution, "That the great Belzebub should, by certain means, by him to be devised, inspire them with my nature, nothing doubting, but if that could be done, they would soon declare in favour of the devil's government."

After he had well weighed every circumstance, the arch-apostate undertook the enterprise; but did not judge it proper to exercise force against them, knowing well, that if their resistance proved equal to their power, all his destructive measures must unavoidably be broken, and the enterprise miscarry. Therefore, like a wise hero and consummate politician, he resolved to accomplish by craft and subtility what was not to be done by open assault; nor did he think it advisable to address them in his own form, least he should frighten them at his first appearance, and by that means render their seduction for ever impracticable: but judiciously concluded, that the most promising method was to assume the body of one of their familiar domestic animals, which were daily under their observation. Accordingly, after long consultation with himself, and strictly examining the brutal tribes, he possessed a beauteous serpent, perceiving that it was head of the reptile world, and best fitted for converse with man, with whom also it was more familiar than all the beasts beside. Thus equipped for executing the deep-projected scheme, he still acted with caution becoming the most consummate experience. He cared not to attack them both at once, lest by any means they should see through his disguise, and he should occasion his own repulse; therefore he craftily lurked near them, and overheard their discourse, that he might better learn which of them was the weaker vessel.

Being a spirit of great penetration, he soon found that the woman was not only the weakest but the youngest; and what greatly encouraged his hope, was, that the man loved the woman with the most tender affection, a circumstance very painful for him to behold. Peace being now a stran-

ger to his own bosom, it was grievous for him to see the felicity of the human pair. In consequence of these discoveries, he made no attempts upon the man, but bent all his endeavours to seduce the woman, not doubting, but if that could be effected, the man would come of course, so strongly was he attached to his yoke-fellow.

I would tell you the whole now, cousin, but I must go and assist my lady Gaiety to dress; for she is to dine with my lord Frolic to-day. About four o'clock I will meet you here.

V—INFIDELIS, IMPIATOR, AND DISCORDANS.

FASTOSUS and Avaro had not been long gone, before I saw Infidelis and Impiator walking up to the rendezvous, and as they walked, thus conversing:

IM. But is it possible, sir, that the papists should ascribe an equal if not a greater glory to the blessed virgin, than to the Son of God?

IN. It is not only possible, but certain; and as a proof of it, I shall repeat to you one of their prayers to her; a prayer which can by no means be offensive to any of our people. "O Mary! the star of the sea, the haven of health, the learned advocate of the guilty; the only hope of the desperate; the saviour of sinners. Thou callest thyself the hand-maid of Jesus Christ, but art his lady; for right and reason willeth, that the mother be above the son: pray him, and command him from above, that he leads us to his kingdom, at the world's end." Here you see, child, that although he was believed by his apostles to be God over all, the papists have found out a way to put him under the command of his virgin mother. Not only so, but they have put him under the command of St. Ann, reputed by them to have been his grandmother, as may be seen in that famous prayer, approved and authorized by the doctors of the Sorbonne, in Paris; I'll repeat the passage, being the fourth paragraph in the prayer: "In homage of the right and power (of mother) which you had over your daughter (Mary), and of grandmother over her son, and of their (Mary's and Jesus's) submission which they render you." Here you see he is supposed to submit to his grandmother Ann, as well as to be under the government of his mother

Mary. I could tell you strange things, son, about the popish religion, and I intend it ere long; but for the present, I would beg of you to give me some farther account of the different cantons of your devotees. I think they were seven in number.

Im. I shall describe them to you, sir. And it would be proper to begin with the canton of drunkards, because that is the royal canton, where I keep my court; but, with your good leave, I shall refer the description of it to the last.

In. Son, your will is your law in this particular; take whatever methods your thoughts suggest as best.

Im. Then I begin with the canton of swearers, the most foolish and unaccountable set of people upon the face of the earth. This canton is divided into two provinces, both which are full of people: in the first province dwell the false swearers, and the profane swearers in the second.

The province of false swearers is divided into three districts, the first of which is inhabited by knights of the post; a set of gentry who get their living by giving evidences in causes to which they are perfect strangers. These knights commonly make their court to the c—k of arr-igns, who, they know, is best capable of finding them employment. It is not a great many years since, a gentlemen walking in the sessions-house, in the Old Bailey, was accosted by one of these knights with, "Pray, sir, do you want a witness? Sir, I'll serve you as cheap and as well as any man." Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, formerly was a mighty protector of this order of knights; and at this day, our good friend, the father of the world, his worthy inquisitors, and not a few right reverend prelates, are head men in the district of false swearers. Many a good Christian has been brought to the stake or gallows, by their assiduity, both among papists and pagans; and more especially the former, who are far from being so honest as the latter; and not by half so consistent.

The second district is inhabited by the mercenary swearers. This is a race supposed to be descended from the knights of the post; and to be sure there is a great likeness betwixt the two. The mercenary swearers will buy a piece of goods for five shillings, and as soon as a buyer presents himself, tells him that, upon his life and soul, it cost him six shillings. When he meets with another seller

of the same commodity, in order to obtain a good pennyworth, he shews him the goods for which he paid five shillings, and tells the stranger, that, "As he hopes to be saved, he gave no more than four and sixpence for it." The dealers in horses, drovers, and butchers, are singularly dexterous at this kind of swearing. In this district it is a prevalent opinion, that a man is not fit to live in the world, unless he can swear to a lie.

The third division is inhabited by the foolish swearers, a people the most remarkably stupid of any under the government of hell. Some of them are so accustomed to it from their infancy, that they do not so much as know when they swear, and are as destitute of design in the practice, as the parrot when it scolds the chamber-maid, or as many good people when they say their prayers at church. Others seem to have such a low opinion of their own probity, that they imagine no one will believe what they say unless every sentence is ushered in with an oath in the van, and confirmed by another in the rear. Gentlemen of family, fortune, and fashion, are stationed in this class, and are extremely dexterous here. Nor are the officers of the fleet and army less learned, or devoid of those embellishments. The greatest part of the English officers indeed, marine and military, esteem a man not fit to carry a musket, unless he can swear a hundred oaths in a quarter of an hour, without any qualms of conscience.

The British army so far excels in this fine art, that they can fairly curse the French off the field of battle, without ever striking a blow; so terrified are the French at the oaths of the English. Ay, father, I assure you, that this heroic practice is now so prevalent among the basest of the multitude, that I could pick you out a low-lived boatswain, who will vie with an admiral; and a dwarfish drummer, who will swear with a lieutenant-general, for any money. Yea, I could pick you out a fellow, who cannot procure whole shoes to his feet, that yet will match any nobleman or esquire in the land at swearing. And, sir, if honour consists in being adepts here, the vilest pedlar may vie with the best of the gentry, and the very footpad may challenge a peer of the realm. The canton of profane swearers is a very populous and very honourable place. Here are dukes, knights of all orders, marquesses, and earls. And a very

worshipful canton it is too, for numbers of very respectable corporations, and many justices of the peace, reside in it.

I have often lauged to see a delinquent brought before a magistrate, and by him be obliged to pay two shillings for every attested oath, when the magistrate himself had not manhood enough to maintain conversation for ten minutes, without being guilty of profane swearing.

In. Pray thee, my son, what are the qualifications requisite to a justice of the peace in thy country?

Im. Two qualifications only, sir, are requisite. The first is, that the gentleman be pretty well to live in the world, and the second, that he shall be an obsequious tool to administration. As to knowledge of the law, love to the people, regard to moral principles, and all such stuff, they are altogether out of the question. I was going to say, it is a very religious canton too; because here you may find a considerable number of reverend parsons, both papists and protestants. As for their oaths in use, they are various, as the fancy of the swearers inclines them. Some swear by heaven, others by the God of heaven; some swear by Christ, others by his blood and wounds; some by St. Peter, others by St. Paul; some by St. Mary, others by her virginity; some swear by the pope, others by his holiness, and by his infallibility; some by the life of their sovereign; some by the life of the devil, and some by their own lives. Some there are who swear by the church, others by the liturgy and mass; and some who, for want of a better epithet, swear by their own eyes and limbs.

In. Indeed, son, these are a set of as foolish people as one would wish to meet with. The devil himself would not wish them to be more foolish. One would wonder to see men of distinction, who disdain to conform to the vulgar in other particulars, rank themselves with gipsies and sturdy beggars, in this most abject and unmanly practice. Sensible people (and some there are still among men) do not esteem a man the more for his acres or pension, but for his virtue and good sense; and hence a swearing gipsy and a swearing gentleman are held as equally dishonourable. But no more of this; I intend not to become a moralist at this time.

Im. I assure you, profitable as they are to me, I am ready to crack my sides with laughing, to see how foolishly they

fight and brawl, curse and damn each other, and how ready they are to forward the devil's interest, notwithstanding it is to their everlasting ruin.

The second canton is that of thieves, and a very flourishing canton it is, notwithstanding we every session send a freight over the Stygian lake,* who no more return to their native country. This canton being very extensive, is likewise divided into several lesser cantons. The first of which contains the gentlemen thieves; a very courtly, polite, and fashionable set of people. Gentlemen thieves, are such who enjoy places of honour and trust, and are not careful of their duty to their king and country. It is observable of them, that when they are out of place, they are the greatest enemies to corruption, and the staunchest friends to liberty in the world. They are capable of no influence, but that of patriotism, so long as unprovided for; but the moment their happy stars make them placemen, they forget their patriotism, drop their enmity to venality, and seek nothing so much as their own emolument, leaving the public to shift for itself. It is thought that not a few gentlemen thieves live within a hundred miles of famous Tyburn; and some people farther think, it is great pity that solemn tree is not more frequently graced with them: but in modern times it is quite unfashionable to hang any but the little thieves.† Those gentlemen, having no principles above ambition and avarice to influence them, being once in place, are capable of being more injurious to the commonwealth, each of them, than a hundred highwaymen; and yet Tyburn is not ho-

* The author has often lamented the unhappy and untimely end of the malefactors hung up every sessions; sometimes for things perhaps comparatively trifling, and which in themselves cannot merit so severe a punishment. It does not appear from Scripture, or reason, that common theft should be punished with the gallows, and especially when the matter stolen is of small value. Nor does it appear to be good policy to deprive society of a member who might afterwards be useful, on account of some rash and unguarded invasion of his neighbour's property. Hang them once, their services are for ever lost to the community. If other methods were taken, villany would be more successfully suppressed, and the members of society spared for usefulness. The British senators must needs see, that the hanging trade does not lessen the number of rogues; nor the untimely end of one leave suitable impressions upon the minds of others. To be bound to hard labour for the space of one year would be more terrible than to be transported for seven; and besides, use might introduce a laborious habit, which would render stealing unnecessary. I am persuaded, that to a dissolute young man, who hates labour, to be chained to a dung-cart, or placed in some other servile station, would be more dreadful than Tyburn itself.

† If an ingenious mechanic should die for filing a single guinea; an extravagant youth be hanged without mercy, for putting you in bodily fear on the highway; or a vain girl in the prime of life be executed for stealing a few yards of lace; and others plunder the nation of thousands with impunity;—it shows that there must be a defect somewhere.

noured with a gentlemen thief above once in a century, much to the grief of real patriots.

Another class of gentlemen thieves, are our officers by sea and land, who impose upon their king and country by false musters: and in a very peculiar manner, those who make their own fortunes (no matter whether in the East or West Indies) by the fatigue of their men, who are left to remain in their original penury: these, together with the commissaries for the army, agents for regiments, &c. are all stationed here.

The second subdivision is peopled by what we call the fashionable thieves. A prodigious populous place is this. Here dwell legions of attornies; vermin, who for five shillings' worth of labour, will charge their clients near the same number of pounds; and very conscientiously take pay for wilfully perverting and defeating a just cause. Here you may find gentlemen, who can procure witnesses to swear just as you would have them, and pack a jury that can give a clear verdict, over the belly of the most consistent evidence. Such a jury hath, ere now, saved a noble neck from the deserved cord, through the all-subduing power of money. To this famous division belongs the tradesman who will take more from an unskilful buyer, than he knows in his conscience his goods are worth: a thing very common among dealers. Also the wealthy gentleman, who, in buying, will take advantage of the indigence of the seller, and pay, if he can, less than the real worth of what he buys; this practice is now so very near to universal, that tradesmen deal with one another, for the most part, as if they were all known to be rogues and cheats, and he is the best tradesman, that can best guard against the villany of his neighbours.

Here dwells the careful tradesman, who, if a man once owes him five pounds, would write down five pounds ten shillings. This method is so much in vogue, that many people dare not trust their names on the tradesmen's books. As for my friend, Sir Roger Latepay, he has had such experience of it, that his wood is in danger. In this fashionable divison dwells the tradesman, who, conscious that his own capital is expended, supports his luxury and grandeur at the expense of his dealers; and many such there be in town and country. The avaricious farmers, manufacturers,

and householders, who make their servants and mechanics work under their usual wages, from the pretence of the deadness of trade, &c. The buyer, who is conscious of his present inability, and spends without any probable view of being hereafter able to pay, dwells in the very heart of this division; and hard by him dwells the father, who, to gratify a depraved taste, squanders away his estate, to the defrauding of his wife and children. All of these, sir, are very fashionable people.

The third division is that of holy thieves; that is, men whose theft is in holy things. By holy thieves, I mean unholy men, sustaining holy offices. Such is he, who enters into orders merely for the sake of a good living. All who climb over the wall, and come not in by the door, are thieves and robbers. Thieves, because they steal the portion of the priests; for, having no right to the sacerdotal function, their participation of the altar is sacrilegious theft. Robbers, because they made havoc of the church, and deprive God's children of the food allowed them by their heavenly Father. Here dwell shoals of popish priests, and very considerable numbers of protestant clergy, of various denominations, as well as the total sum of pagan and Mahometan muftis. His holiness, the pope of Rome, is indeed president in this division, for he steals the prerogatives of God, and applies them to his own private use.

The fourth division in the canton of thieves, are those whom we call the sporting thieves. Such are the card-players, cock-fighters, horse-coursers, and gamblers of all sorts. I know of none of my sporting subjects, but what will win if they can, either by upright, or inequitable means. Therefore with us it is an established maxim, that the true gambler is the certain thief. Here, too, you may find princes, nobles, spiritual and temporal, and judges of every rank. Ha! ha! ha! how have I been ready to split my sides with laughing, to see an archbishop lay aside his mitre, and take up a pack of cards; and the sacred judge, after having passed sentence on a criminal, lay aside all his solemnity, and put on the sprightly sportsman. Then cried I, Oh, the bench! Oh, the pulpit! Oh, the gambler!

The fifth division in the canton of thieves is inhabited by what we call fantastic thieves. A very contemptible canton this is with sensible people. Yet, foolish as they are

with their nostrums, they make it appear that there are people more foolish than themselves; for they pick the pockets of neighbouring cantons very cleverly. Here dwell your Daffys, Godfreys, Stoughtons, Fluggers, Lowthers, Jameses, Turlingtons, &c. Here the famous Mr. Mountebank is president, and Mr. Andrew Archee is his deputy. In this division nothing is heard of but pills, lozenges, troches, balsams, elixirs, drops, cordials, and the ready coin; for the fantastical thieves can give no credit.

The sixth division consists of plain honest highwaymen: honest, when compared with many of the others; for when they are about to rob a man, they very honestly tell him their design, and stake but a few high words and the mouth of the pistol, against the purse and all that is in it, which, notwithstanding the odds be greatly on the traveller's side, the highwaymen carries lightly off, with the watch into the bargain. Whereas many of the gentlemen thieves carry on their work so slily, that you know not their intention of robbing you, till long after the robbery is committed. Oh! Tyburn, Tyburn, thou hast long groaned for such men as these!

Here, too, are many venerable priests, who by pretended pardons, dispensations, &c., play the pickpocket to great advantage. Much could I say about this class of veterans in the thieving trade, were I not afraid of exciting their resentment, which would be very detrimental to my designs, as they lead the consciences of the laity just which way they please.

In. Indeed, my son, by your account of them, the highwaymen and pickpockets are less prejudicial to society than many who are held to be men of great renown.

Im. Ay, sir, a thousand times; and I can tell you, that some of the greatest names are enrolled in the annals of this canton of thieves.

There are the Grecian and Roman heroes, almost in general, particularly great Alexander, and Julius Cæsar. There is Tamerlane, there is Kouli Khan, there is Philip of Spain; and there is L——s of France, who has as good an inclination to thieving as any body. Poor gentleman, it is not half a century since he put forth his hand, to pick the pocket of George king of Britain, but he got his fingers wofully bitten before he could pull them in again. But

what is bred in the bone, will never be out of the flesh; therefore, as the English did not take care effectually to secure themselves when they had it in their power, they must expect farther experience of French theft.

In. One would have thought that the English have had so many instances of royal theft from that quarter, that they would have effectually prevented future danger from thence. Nor are our good friends the Spaniards less inclined to the thievish practice than their neighbours; witness Peru and Mexico, those once opulent and populous kingdoms, which now belong to them in the same manner, as the purse of gold belongs to the highwayman, who took it from the gentleman he murdered.

Im. Ay, sir, great thieves are abundantly more hurtful to mankind than thieves of a dwarfish size; though famous Tyburn and the places a-kin to it seldom have the honour of ushering them into the other world.

The third canton is the liars' canton, a people with double tongues, and of the nature of an otter, amphibious. The great Belzebub himself is grand president here, but is represented by two famous deputies, namely, the artful Mahomet, and the good old gentleman at Rome. Of the two, the latter is most in favour at court, because, as Belzebub says, he is so very much of his own image; although, it must be owned, Mahomet bears a very great resemblance. All the holy fathers, my lords the inquisitors, with their assistant familiars; all the venerable patriarchs, and princely cardinals, reside in the metropolis, near the exchange, in the principal street, which is a straight thoroughfare to hell. The bishops of both ranks are stationed next to them, and greatly facilitate the journey of passengers. The very populous suburbs are inhabited by the sons of St. Ignatius; than whom, none are more excellent at the arts of lying and evasion; and here too are abundance of friars of every order, who, though less crafty than the jesuits, are very diligent in the great work of deceit. In this country, politeness and learning have arrived at the greatest perfection; here are abundance of courtiers and statesmen, besides atheists and deists, highly esteemed by our people for their learning and sense.

The famous court liars are like a dead fish, they always swim with the stream of power. They are for or against

stamp-acts, and general warrants, just as the sentiments of their superiors direct; they are protestants, or intolerant papists, or neither, just as their prince is inclined, or as their own interests require. Their consciences are tender as a willow, and will turn any way with the application of a purse of gold, a place, a pension, or a peerage. When it serves their low and base purposes, you will find them patriots; but if the good of the nation clashes with their sinister views, you may find them traitors, either to church or state, or to both. Of this class were Bonner and Gardiner; zealous protestants in the days of Edward the Sixth, and bloody papists in the reign of his sister of scarlet memory. To this class also belonged Sharp, the archbishop of St. Andrews, for it was not conviction, but gold, that changed his sentiments from presbytery to prelacy. All the arguments which my lords the bishops of England had advanced, made no more impression upon him, than an arrow would have made upon a rock of flint; but when his majesty came in a rhetorical manner, to press him home with a heavy purse of gold, a coach and six, and a bishopric, he was quite confounded, and had not a word to say for mother kirk of Scotland. Such court arguments as this, sir, stop the mouths of many a patriot; Lord C——m is a recent proof of this. Such was the force of his elocution, that it could gain battles, subdue states, reverse laws, and make placemen tremble, till he was unhappily confounded by a place, a pension, and a peerage; and now, poor gentleman, he has nothing left to gratify his ambition, but the melancholy reflection of what he once was.

There is another herd of court liars (excuse the phrase, sir, because it is the common opinion, that of all vermin court liars are the most detestable), who fawn like a spaniel upon every prince that ascends the throne, in order to ingratiate themselves into his favour, thereby to make sure of their own emolument. If the manners of the prince are ever so dissolute, they caress him as their most wise and amiable monarch. Though he were as much of a dastard as Sardanapalus, they will persuade him that he may vie with Hector for magnanimity. If he is a drunkard or glutton, they will flatter him with his temperance; or represent his luxury as a princely virtue, very becoming a royal personage; even if one half of his subjects be famish-

ing for want of bread. Some of those court liars will tell their prince, that it is no crime at all for him to enter his neighbour's territories, and murder twenty or thirty thousand of his subjects, though there is really no cause given on their part for the hostile invasion. Some such villains precipitated Lewis of France into a war with Britain, which would infallibly have proved his ruin, had he not been well befriended by some people near St. James's.

A truly patriotic courtier is a strong pillar to the throne, but court liars are the destruction of that prince whose ear they govern.

It is my opinion, that a prince has need either to be a very wise man himself, or to have very honest men about him. Happy is that nation who has a wise and prudent king, and at the same time honest and faithful ministers. Earthly thrones are so infested with fawning flatterers, that if the prince is not very well acquainted with his bible, it is difficult for him to know whether he is virtuous or vicious.

In. That is a book in little esteem. Great men are for the most part too polite to trouble themselves with its contents, because they are so unfavourable to their practices.

Im. True, and by those means princes are the more readily deceived. For a mitred courtier may, perhaps, tell his prince, that it is lawful for a royal personage to debauch the wife or daughter of one of an inferior rank, but unlawful for a plebeian; notwithstanding his spiritual lordship knows very well, that when God said, "Whoremongers and adulterers I will judge," he exempted not the prince any more than the peasant; for with him there is no respect of persons, on account of their worldly dignity.

Another right reverend courtier tells his prince, that it is allowable enough in him, on the sabbath, after the irksome service is over at church, to divert himself with a quiet, civil game at chess, quadrille, or whatever his pious inclinations lead him to; and that it may be lawful for some favourite nobility to assist at the sport; but, says he, it is utterly unlawful for the husbandman and low mechanic; though the downy doctor knows well enough, that when the Almighty sanctified the sabbath, it was not a part only, but the whole sabbath he intended.

In. Well, Impiator, whatever licence the right reverends allow at court, their sable brethren in the country are not

less indulgent; for in most parishes in England, the people may swear or pray, get drunk or communicate, go to church or stay at home, get to heaven or hell, just as their inclination leads them, for any concern his reverence the parson gives himself, provided always he is not cheated of his dues.

Im. I know I am well befriended by many clergymen; but to return to the prince, I assure you I have often thought that, of all men, it is the greatest difficulty for him to be a good man, and get safe to heaven. He has so many about him, who are base enough to commend even his vices, and but very few who love him well enough to correct his errors. But if I become a moralist now, you'll suppose I act out of character. However many have exhausted all their wit and good nature upon the court liars, they are still the same, they lie as fast as ever for the sake of money, estates, high places, &c.; therefore some people call them mercenary liars.

But many of the inhabitants of this canton are less ambitious, and will very freely tell lies for a penny gain; amongst those are the travelling tradesmen, who carry their shops upon their backs. Them we call the petty dealers, and the humble liars. But we have others more generous still, who will give you a lie fresh from the mint, with no other view but to raise a laugh; these we call the merry liars, because they go laughing to hell. Others we have who stand in the capacity of godfathers and godmothers, who very roundly promise and vow to do, for the child, what they never intend to perform. Some people call them the foolhardy liars. Next to them reside a venerable tribe, called by the name of reverend liars. Reverend, because in holy orders; and liars, because they tell my lord bishop, that they are moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them the office of a deacon, whereas they are moved by the hope of a good living, not knowing that there is such a being as the Holy Ghost; and deeming it enthusiasm to profess to be moved by him. When once put into orders, and a benefice, those worthy gentlemen rave against all who profess to be influenced in their devotion by the Holy Spirit, as fanatics, enthusiasts, and madmen. Now either my good friend the parson lies to my lord bishop or his congregation: but the truth is, he lies to both.

The fourth canton is that of sabbath-breakers, which is a very populous, polite, and opulent canton indeed. The far greater part of the nobility, and other gentlemen of rank and fortune, reside here; they are too well bred to worship God on Sunday, in public or private. They scorn to suppose themselves indebted to the Almighty for life, and breath, and all things; or to be accountable to him for the use they make of their time, estates, and talents. They leave it to the low-lived mechanics to go to church or meeting, or when there, to be devout and take notice of what they are about. Let the parson talk about heaven, or hell, or what he will, they are unconcerned, never once supposing themselves endued with immortal souls.

There is my good friend, my lord Timelagg, a nobleman of the first distinction; he is so taken up through the week with contriving how to provide for himself and his creatures, that he is in no condition to go to church on Sunday, but chooses some convenient part of it for an airing; either in the coach with my lady, or on horseback with his cousin squire Idle. Mrs. Housekeeper also is very closely employed in preparing tea and chocolate against their return. Mr. Steward is very busy in preparing his rent rolls, studiously contriving how to extract an estate for himself out of his master's, so that he cannot go to church at any rate. The footman and my lady's woman must needs attend their master and mistress; the coachman and postillion must guide the machine; the butler and groom must be within call, one to take care of the horses, and the other to furnish with claret, or champaign; so that the minister is very little obliged to his lordship for finding him an auditory to preach to.

The London tradesmen come up as near to his lordship's example as their circumstances will admit of; their spirits are quite exhausted with the fatigues of weekly business; therefore, instead of leading their families duly to church, you may meet squadrons of them every Saturday night and Sunday morning going to regale themselves with a Sunday's pleasure, which consists in eating, carousing, and riding.

Then there is your sabbath-day visitors; very genteel people. The tea-table gossips are much concerned here; and here you may find hundreds of tables, the conversation

of which is supported at the expense of the reputation of some absent: for it must be observed that our gossips are so absolutely destitute of innate ideas, and are such perfect strangers to the affairs of civil life, that they cannot support conversation five minutes at a sitting, but by the help of slander. Hence some people have said, that slander is the very soul of conversation. And sure enough if you will pick out all the slanderous expressions from the conversation of our gossips, you will have but a very scanty fragment remaining.

There are others so given up to indolence, that they keep great part of the sabbath in bed, on a couch, or in the easy chair; these people are so exceedingly oppressed with the weight of their own bodies, that they can attend at neither church nor chapel, although active enough the other parts of the week: and yet they are good Christians, and hope to go to heaven when they die: and yet they seldom think of any thing but living for ever, in order to which they eat, drink, and sleep away the sabbath. These go by the name of lazy sabbath-breakers; and all who are employed the whole morning in preparing superfluities for dinner, live along with them.

Another class of sabbath-breakers consists of the petty dealers, who buy or sell commodities, for back or belly, on the sabbath day. We call them the mistrustful sabbath-breakers, because they cannot trust God with their customers; and slothful sabbath-breakers, because they do not provide for their families on the six days appointed for labour. England, with all its bravery, is horribly disgraced by a set of profane people, such as grocers, chandlers, butchers, barbers, and bakers; who will not miss the taking a penny on the sabbath, any more than another day. Besides them, there are tailors, mantua and shoe-makers, who, with their late finishes, make great encroachments on the sabbath, and that in the most open manner.

In. I thought, in England, the law had made provision against such enormous breaches of the sabbath.

Im. Yes, the laws do indeed make provision for the suppression of such vices, but I have the pleasure of seeing the enforcing of those laws, very often, left with people who are entirely devoted to my interest; so the laws are frequently asleep, when I am awake and upon my rounds.

But there is another tribe against whom there is no human law. I mean the thinking sabbath-breakers: a careful industrious set of people, esteemed by all, and known but to few. They are constantly employed through the week, and are glad of the sabbath's approach, that they may repair their bodily fatigue, and give a free scope to their plodding minds. When they awake on the sabbath morning, they are deeply contemplating some transactions of the past week, or concerting measures proper to be followed in the ensuing. Nor does the man alter his subject when he goes to church. No, he is quite uniform; try him, and you will find him all of a piece. Let the parson choose what subject he will, the other sticks to his text; so that it often happens when the minister thinks his auditory is collected, and the bulk of his parish appear at church, he is mistaken, for the greatest part of those whom he thinks to be present, are only there in appearance; their minds, their better part, being absent on other occasions.

For instance, the parson sometimes thinks that he sees squire Folly and madam his lady, in the front pew of the right hand gallery: but he is mistaken, for only their bodies are there, their minds are absent. As for the esquire, he is busy chasing the hare or fox over all the hedges and ditches in his manor; and his lady is mentally at this ball, or the other assembly, or at this play, or the other opera; or perhaps she is cheapening silks at Mr. Cant's, silk-mercer, on Ludgate-hill.

Sometimes the merchant seems to be at church; however he is only there in body, his soul having sailed in the good ship Bonaventure, to buy slaves on the coast of Guinea, or barter goods at Bengal or Malabar. The mercer, draper, and grocer, seem sometimes to be there, but frequently it is an imposition, for although their bodies may indeed be present, their souls are gone on a journey, to visit their customers, or are left at home in the counting-house, balancing their books; examining their tradesmen's bills, that they may know with whom they can deal to the greatest advantage: perhaps issuing forth a capias against squire Latepay, a gentleman well known to those dealers; or it may be, the soul is busy entering protests against certain extravagant manufacturers.

As for the industrious farmer, you may well think he has

something else to employ his mind, than either sermon or prayers: for it must needs require much thought and forecast to determine right, where to sow his wheat, where his clover, and what land to set apart for hemp; how to dispose of his young colt, and the gray horse, which is in danger of losing his eyes. And he, good man, hath found from long experience, that he can contrive better at church than any where else; and being willing to thrive in the world, he will let slip no opportunity proper for advantageous consideration.

But I can tell you, sir, if the people so frequently put the cheat upon their parson, he in his turn retaliates upon them; and many times when the congregation flatter themselves that they see the parson in, and hear his voice from, the pulpit, they are mistaken; for it is only his body, his soul being attending the levee of this nobleman, or the other bishop, making his court for a fatter benefice. These, sir, are some of the thinking sabbath-breakers.

Then there are the mad sabbath-breakers, a set of the very dregs of humanity, and yet by some means or other their impious practices are connived at, notwithstanding interdicted by all laws divine and human. Such are our pellet throwers in Yorkshire and Durham; our foot-ball tossers, who are found all over the nation; our leapers, runners, tavern-hunters, and all of every denomination who exercise themselves in any sport on the sabbath, are stationed along with the mad sabbath-breakers.

Last of all, there are our religious sabbath-breakers, a district that is formed of party zealots and self-seekers, both preachers and hearers. As for the former, their doctrine is various; one man preaches the pope, another preaches the councils, one preaches St. Dominic, another St. Francis. One preaches episcopacy, like the great Sacheverell, another preaches presbytery, as the only way of salvation. One preaches up mankind in general, and another preaches his own personal endowments in particular; but as for preaching Jesus Christ, that is quite foreign to their purpose, and is therefore left to be performed by others. Thus, sire, you have had a view of the canton of sabbath-breakers.

In. And a noble canton it is, my son, both rich and populous, of great service to us, and vast enlargement to the territories of Belzebub. How illustrious is the throne

of great Impiator! I long to have a description of the rest of your kingdom, but for the present I must be gone, my son. Will you please to give me the meeting here to-morrow morning?

Im. I will, sir; adieu.

VI.—FASTOSUS AND AVARO.

Privy to the appointment betwixt Fastosus and Avaro, I resolved to stay their coming, and had not been long, before I saw them at a distance, walking up the valley towards me. Arrived at the usual place of conference, Fastosus struck twice with his rod on the earth, and instantly there arose two thrones of the blackest ebony, one of which he occupied himself, and the other was filled by his cousin Avaro. Thus enthroned, Fastosus opened the conversation, whilst I seized my pen, and sat eager to catch the fleeting sound.

Fa. You know, Avaro, when we parted in the morning, I was going to assist my lady Gaiety to dress for her visit to my good lord Frolic. I went accordingly, and hard work I assure you we had of it. As soon as I appeared before the toilet, I received orders to render myself invisible, and not to depart the room, that I might be in readiness to adjust the head-dress, and bosom ornaments. Yes, madam, said I, I will give your ladyship due attendance; with that I rendered myself invisible to her, but continued visible to all other beholders. So to dressing we went. First we ornamented her feet, which was attended with very considerable difficulty; it cost us several tyings and untyings before her ladyship was pleased with her own foot. At last having finished the feet, and my lady viewed them several times in every position, we proceeded to other parts of the important work. First we did and then we undid every part of the finery. But our hardest work about the head and bosom was, how to put one as much as possible out of its native form, and to expose the other, so as to make sure of attracting the eyes of beholders. Monsieur Frisseur, who was our assistant, gave it as his opinion, that to come up to the very zenith of the mode, it was necessary she should bear her head as much as possible in resemblance to a ram without horns; and Mrs. Prude, my lady's woman,

told us plainly, that Mrs. Pander, whose province is to establish female customs, had expressly declared, every lady worth above one hundred a year, ought in full dress to wear her bosom quite naked. My lady is adorned with excellent hair, but it will not serve her except it bear a look the most unnatural possible. Her skin, fair as alabaster, we were obliged to daub with patches, the colour of Belzebub's coat, as a token of her loyalty to the black prince of the nether regions. But how to place these patches was a question of no ordinary concern, and hardly resolved at last. First we tried one large patch on her chin, but my lady soon perceived, that it hid the beauteous dimple, which nature had there impressed, and therefore it was presently removed. Then we tried how the cheek would answer, but alas! it obscured the lively rose, which is a native there, and which my lady takes great delight to view in her glass; on this account we exempted the cheek from the burden. At last, after much anxiety, and very serious consideration, it was resolved that we should fix it on the middle of her forehead, resembling the eye of a cyclop, and put a little one on the left side of her chin, bearing the likeness of a mole. However, it cost several trials with them in both places, ere the patches would lie agreeably to her ladyship's fancy.

Av. Ah! Fastosus, if the ladies only knew how ridiculous they make themselves look in the eyes of the judicious, they would be very loth thus to deform their native beauty. What delicate beauty—what perfect comeliness, do we see rendered disagreeable and ridiculous by these transformations! And how can they be but disagreeable and ridiculous, when all the decorations of nature lie concealed, and nothing appears but the manufactory of art, that great supplanter of nature? Such ladies are certainly greatly deceived by you, Fastosus; for the end proposed by all those metamorphoses is, to render themselves agreeable to the gentlemen, whereas they produce the contrary effect. Art can never beget love. This is nature's work alone. Art may indeed excite lust; but nature alone begets that love which a virtuous lady would strive to obtain. It is strange, Fastosus, that nature has so little, and affectation such great concern among people of fashion at this day! Well, I hope you pleased her at last?

Fa. Yes, yes, I hope I did; but my work did not end with madam; for Mrs. Prude, her woman, who was assisting us in the equipment of her lady, and often put her tongue into her cheek, and bit her lip, to prevent her laughing out when she saw her mistress's vanity; as soon as I had done with her lady, beseeched me that I would put a few pins into her clothes, because she was to attend her mistress to lord Frolic's; and notwithstanding my patience was almost spent before, I was obliged to stay ever so long, pinning and unpinning her, for Mrs. Prude affected the fine gentlewoman almost as much as her mistress.

But what vexed me worse than all the rest was, just as I had got to the bottom of the stairs, to make my escape, the cook-maid caught me in her greasy arms, and begged me to assist her to dress herself in her half-holiday clothes, as her sweetheart was to take the advantage of her lady's absence to come and visit her. I could not deny the girl, because I thought she really had need of considerable amendment, before she presented herself to her lover. So after we had pinned and unpinned a considerable time, I burst through the casement, to avoid the importunity of the laundry and chamber-maids, whom I saw coming. Thus I gave them the slip; for those ladies and their female attendants would drudge any devil in hell off his feet, might they have their own way. But I am right glad that I am come hither from among them.

Av. Then, sir, I perceive with all your greatness you have no objection to assisting a waiting-woman, or a cook-maid occasionally.

Fa. No objection at all, cousin; the soul of a waiting-woman will fill a vacancy in hell, as well as that of her lady. The difference is this; the lady of honour is capable of drawing more to hell along with her than her waiting-woman can, therefore I choose to make sure of the mistress, and for the most part the maid comes along by her example. But as soon as we get them safely inclosed within our flaming prison, we let them see we are no respecters of persons; for the mistress and her maids, my lord and his valet, the squire and his groom, have all the same apartment allotted them, feed all at the same table, drink of the same cup, and are served by the same devil, whom they never find to be sparing of his liquor; but to serve

them plenteously, though much contrary to their inclinations.

Av. That doctrine you unpreach when you attend upon them, Fastosus. You wisely keep your thumb upon that, and indeed it is well so to do; for comely as your appearance is, they would discard you else. Serious thoughts of futurity would spoil all our sport, uncle.

Fa. Indeed, Avaro, I am not such a half-wit as to tell my lord, that his riches and grandeur, if not duly improved, will sink him lower in the bottomless abyss than the rustic plebeian; nor am I such an inconsiderate devil, as to tell him that his hunting, hawking, horse-coursing, cock-fighting, card-playing, drinking, swearing, whoring, &c., are the broad ways to never-ending torment. Neither do I foolishly tell my lady, that balls, assemblies, plays, &c., are the rosy paths which lead most infallibly to ruin. No, no, let me alone for that; I warrant me I can keep my counsel well enough; and as for them, they will find all out at last, without any instruction.

Av. If I remember right, Fastosus, when we parted last, you were relating the manner in which you made your entrance good amongst men; I should be glad, sir, if you will be so obliging as to finish that account.

Fa. I purpose it, Avaro. You may remember I told you that great Belzebub, having discovered the woman to be the weaker vessel, he made no attempts upon the virtue of the man, but resolved by all means to seduce the woman, not doubting but she would bring over her husband to our interest along with her. It happened one night that Adam had a dream, ominous of her conquest, which made him very fearful, lest any part of his or his wife's conduct should promote the dire event; therefore he reasoned with her concerning their duty to their Creator, gave her the strictest charge to keep out of the way of temptation, and withal informed her, that he was not without his fears, even upon her account. But she for her part, just as the devil would have it, resolved to separate herself from her husband that day, which she had never done before. Whether she thought to endear herself more to him, by letting him see how well she would resist temptation, if any should offer, or took it rather ill, to be under his tutorage, I pretend not to say; but maugre all his entreaties, she would go forth

by herself into a distant walk, to gather some delicious berries, for an innocent repast for her and her lord, at noon.

This was an opportunity just to Belzebub's wish, and he took care to improve it to advantage. I told you before, that previous to this, he had possessed the body of a beautiful snake, in those days man's familiar domestic; and now finding Eve at a distance from her husband, the serpent discovered himself to her, and with more than animal gestures attracted her eye. Captivated with its unusual motion, she stood ravished with its beauties and admiring its agility. As it drew near to her, she put forth her gentle hand, stroked its skin, and the subtle animal, after its manner, returned the compliment by laying its shining head on her lap. Their station was near to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, upon which the forbidden fruit luxuriously hung. To this tree the serpent frequently looked with all the languishment of ardent desire, till once he made sure that the woman observed it. "Lie still, thou pretty creature," said she (stroking it);" what makes thee look so earnestly at that prohibited fruit?" "Ah! thou fair goddess, "returned the serpent," I have good reason to admire the sovereign virtue of that delicious tree; for I was created only in a brutal station, without consciousness of mind, or the use of my tongue: till being on my thoughtless ramble yesterday, I chanced to espy this amazing tree, whose fruit hangs in such luxuriance. After a short pause, such as a brute may be capable of, I climbed up the tree, and began to feast on the most delicious fruit that ever was eaten. Joyful at my happy fate, I soon became sensible of a self-conscious mind, capable of discerning between good and evil. Soon my tongue, which before cleaved to the roof of my mouth, was untied, and I could express sentiments of joy in the most rational manner. And now when I met with you, I was going to renew my repast on the fruit of that sovereign tree."

Av. Oh! Fastosus, the most subtle scheme that ever was heard of! Well, this may be spoken to the honour of Belzebub, when I am dead and gone.

Fa. Well, but Satan did not then know of the happy consequences that have since arisen from this affair, to some part of the human race. However, having laid his snare with all the subtility he was master of, he thought it

well to assault the pure mind of Eve with unbelief.* He asked her, if the reason why she was so divinely beautiful was not her feeding often upon the fruit of that so sovereign a tree? The woman answered, "No; we have never so much as once tasted of it, but invariably observed the command of our great Creator, who hath put us into this garden, and said unto us, 'Of every tree of the garden ye may freely eat, but the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil ye may not eat, for in the day ye eat thereof ye shall surely die.'" To whom the serpent, "Indeed! Did he really say so? Are you not mistaken, think you? Die, too! why am not I dead, then; I who have eaten of it so plenteously? No, no; you shall not die. That is only an empty threatening to keep you in subjection to him; for he very well knows, that the moment you eat thereof, you shall be like himself, knowing good and evil; no longer be man and woman, but become gods."

The woman replied, "Ay, but, my pretty creature, how shall I know that I shall be a goddess, if I should venture to eat of that desirable fruit?" "Know!" said the serpent, you may easily know it, if you consider that if I, who was created only a brute beast, am by eating the fruit of this tree exalted to humanity, you, who are more than half a god already, shall certainly, by so doing, be exalted to real divinity." With these words, he injected into her bosom some seeds of my nature, which fermented to that degree, that nothing would now serve her turn but to be deified. Sagacious Belzebub, perceiving the uproar I had made in her mind, introduced all the train of real vices which now infect the human species; subjected her wholly to his sway, and she, as his instrument, could have no rest till she got her husband's neck also fast in Belzebub's yoke.

Thus was pride first introduced into the terrene creation, and thus was man subjected to my powerful sway. Being brought forth in the heart of man, I arrived instantly at full growth, involved them in sorrow, enveloped them in blindness and ignorance; and instead of that happiness and dignity which Belzebub had promised them, of becoming gods, I brought forth in them trusty Shame, the elder born of my earthly family; and he, as a spirit of great power, made Adam and Eve fly to a thicket, to hide themselves from

* See page 48.

the presence of an offended God. Instead of becoming gods, I transformed them into the image and likeness of father Belzebub, in which image they begat and brought forth their children. It was now that I begat the lovely Discordans; to us the more lovely, because he is anti-natural. No sooner was he born, but he sounded a trumpet, and cried, "To arms, to arms!" Then you might have seen the rhinoceros and elephant, the eagle and dragon, the lion, panther, and wolf, appear in all the fury of martial spirit, and proclaimed an eternal war against one another: nor were Adam and Eve exempted from domestic uneasiness themselves.

Av. All this worked just as the devil would have it, and greatly enlarged the territories of hell, by annexing earth to the infernal crown. Well, uncle, I perceive by your account, that you are the father of sin, in the mind of both angels and men.

Fa. True, Avaro, I am; and so well is my power established, that I am the very last that shall be subdued, and rooted out of the hearts even of those that hate me, and who at last shall be delivered from my yoke. This is true, cousin, whether you believe it or not; and I assure you, that I have the pleasure of giving many a painful heart-pang even to those who curse my name and nature. But to my story, cousin; I manifested my powerful sway over man, in the case of my faithful servant Cain, not only in his bloody revenge against his brother Abel, who had revolted from our government, but in making him despair under his punishment.

I triumphed gloriously over the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, who for my sake scorned to submit to the commandments of God, resolving to be guided by the thoughts of their own hearts, all of which were inspired by me; therefore every thought and imagination of the heart was only evil continually. I wrought them up to such a degree of rebellion, that the Almighty resolved to bear with them no longer, but to sweep them away with the besom of destruction; yet he would not do it without giving them proper warning, and calling them to repentance and reformation. One Noah, a famous preacher of righteousness, was the instrument raised up on this occasion; and to be sure the man preached faithfully and fervently; but I had

the pleasure of hardening the people's hearts to that degree, that he met with nothing but abuse for his pains. Every body accounted him to be a frantic enthusiast, fanatic, or methodist; till the divine patience was quite worn out, and their destruction came upon them by a deluge, which swept them all from the face of the earth, except this same Noah and his family; and, for my part, I do not remember a time on which hell had so many visitants at once as then.

Av. But how could Noah and his family be saved, when the deluge came upon all the earth?

Fa. Why, Avaro, it was by the help of a ship, which he was taught to build. For this same Noah was the first ship-carpenter in the world; and although a prince, he was not above labouring with his hands. But it galls me to think, how the Almighty mixes mercy with judgment; for in this destruction which he brought upon the old world, he taught the new world the most necessary and useful art of navigation, by means of which he will spread the knowledge of himself over the earth.

After this, I set up my lofty standard on the plains of Shinar; multitudes flocked to it, and became my humble servants. It was now I projected the scheme of erecting a tower equal in altitude to Jacob's ladder. Two special advantages I alleged to them would accrue from it when finished. The first to perpetuate their name to the latest posterity: the second and greatest advantage would be, that thereby they might bid defiance to the Almighty. Such provision being made for their safety, that, on the first appearance of judgment begun, they might retire to the tower, where the waters could not follow them. But here you may observe, I played the devil with the children of men, for, although I flattered them with such advantages, I believed in my heart that such a presumptuous, daring undertaking, would have provoked the Almighty utterly to have destroyed them root and branch. And indeed at one time I thought I had gained my point; for he did come down, and confounded their language in such a manner, that the great design miscarried. It was diverting to hear the bricklayer call for mortar, and, lo, a box of brick was brought him; another calls for bricks, and the server runs for a board of mortar; one calls out for a level, and he receives a plumb-line; another asks for a square, and a

level is brought him. The bricklayers, provoked to see themselves mocked by their servants, not as yet knowing their language to be confounded, began to lay their resentment upon the bones of the labourers; and the labourers considering themselves as very ill used, returned the abuse upon the builders: and thus they quarrelled and bickered, till they were fain to leave off the work, and betake themselves to other employments.

But alas! cousin, in this affair the devil was outwitted; for we all thought that this haughty attempt would have provoked God utterly to destroy them; but he made use of our project only to send them abroad to people the earth, the more widely to make his glories known. And to the deep mortification of all our black fraternity, especially father Belzebub, upon the ruins of the tower was written in everlasting characters the following motto: "Here the devil overshot himself." But this was a trifling disappointment in comparison of many others, some of which I may perhaps give you an account of.

Wherever the sons of Noah went, I went along with them; and not a great number of years had the earth been dry, before I persuaded them to forge, found, and carve to themselves objects of religious adoration, more agreeable to their fancy than the God who made them; and by this means it was, that pagan idolatry was introduced, which, strictly speaking, is the religion of pride alone; even as the present Roman catholic religion is that of pride and covetousness. I will tell you strange things of my government, Avaro, at a time convenient; but as we were coming along, you mentioned somewhat about the clergy of France; pray what of them, cousin?

Av. I have often, sir, made honourable mention of the dutiful disposition of my dear children, the French parsons; but I had some years ago occasion to try an experiment, which greatly quickened their devotion, and clothed the face of all the country with poignant sorrow. By their unwearied pursuit of the interest of the church, that is to say, by their coaxing, wheedling, and threatening of people, out of their goods and chattels, for the benefit of the clergy; they were grown so fat and purse-proud, they were not able to say half of the masses they were paid for, nor to attend upon the duties of their pretended devotion; which per-

sisting in, they themselves would have contributed to the opening of people's eyes to discover the cheat.

I imagined that nothing could be more suitable than physic, to purge off some of their grossness. I went straight to Versailles, demanded an interview with the most Christian Lewis, and accordingly was introduced by one of the lords of his bed-chamber. As soon as he had done me greeting after the royal manner, proportionable to his very great esteem for me, I opened the conversation in the following manner: "My royal friend (said I), perceiving that you have been ransacking the world lately, in quest of gold, to supply your pressing and growing wants, I am come to inform you where you may meet with store of moidores; yea, treasures in abundance, without travelling out of your own dominions." "Is it possible (said he), I pray thee, lovely spirit, where are the golden heaps to be found?" I replied, "the clergy, the clergy, sir, are so overgrown in riches, that they are hardly able to say a hospitable mass for the dead, or even to go about to cheat and defraud people out of their money and souls as heretofore." "Ungrateful villains (said he), to hoard up their money to lie by them useless, when I, their king, am just at the point of becoming bankrupt. I'll ease them of their burden, I warrant you; I'll let them for once know, that they have another master besides the pope, and leave it to them to replace their stores the nearest way they can." I was not afraid but my scheme would work to my mind, for I took him at the very nick of time, when the king of England had emptied his coffers, by destroying his naval force and trade; and, poor gentleman, he knew not well how to fill them again.

Glad of such an opportunity, he assembled the heads of the clergy, and demanded of them an exorbitant sum, in the way of a free gift; a very genteel way of robbing the church indeed. The holy gownsmen, like dear children of their good Avaro, shewed themselves as tenacious of their gold, as the paw of a lion is of its prey. They used every argument which priestly subtlety could invent; they lugged in both heaven and earth as protectors of their property; yea, they even told him that to command them to part with their money, was no less than robbing the Almighty; just as if the Almighty and they were partners in

the trade of priestcraft. But clergymen have the advantages of all princes in that, their cause is always the cause of God; although God has, in reality, nothing to do with them or it. They held both with teeth and hands, rather than generously assist their sovereign, though now become almost insolvent. But you know the proverb, "The weaker goes to the wall;" and so it was with them. He being stronger than they, prevailed; and although their money came from their coffers like blood from their hearts, they were obliged to comply. But I can assure you, the parting with it cost them more real distress of soul, than ever the selling of their consciences to obtain it had done. The sorrow of the priests is for the most part a farce, but their sorrow on this occasion was deep and unfeigned.

It was not a great while after, that moidores failed a second time, and other resources being drained, he again had recourse to the sons of the clergy; and did by them as they commonly do by the laity. I mean, their money being gone, he was content with stripping them of their plate; so that were you now to see the cabinet of a French priest, you would find it as empty of plate as Glaud the shepherd's pantry. And I am of opinion, that Lewis having found the way to their nest, he will take care they be no more overgrown in riches. But to repair their late losses, they can now look out for a prey with as much penetration as an eagle, and are rapid as a panther in seizing on it.

Fa. It is my opinion, cousin, that if princes were to take care that the church should not become too rich, there would not be so many religions as there are; but who would not be a priest, or a nun, when they may roll amidst the blessings of both worlds; and under the pretence of religious retirement, enjoy every thing grateful to the flesh in the greatest luxuriance, without any labour or toil of their own? I assure you, cousin, if I were not a devil, I would choose to be a priest myself.

Av. Being a priest is not such a great privilege now as it has been, though it is still preferable to any trade of the lay kind: the expulsion of the jesuits has been very injurious to priestcraft. The church is sure to thrive in the reign of a prince who is under the direction of a jesuitical confessor; and the priesthood will always find in him a powerful protector: but I fear much that the princes of

Europe, from their late advances, will at last throw off the yoke of ecclesiastical tyranny.

FA. In fact, cousin, it is not a little strange, that they have not done it ere now. Nothing can be more preposterous than for a prince, who hath sovereign sway over extensive dominions, to be under the controul of an arrogant priest, as if it were by him that kings reign and princes decree judgment; or as if he were the prince of the kings of the earth.

However, cousin, you forget that it is time for us to go on our nocturnal circuits. Mine is very extensive; I must therefore bid you adieu. To-morrow morning let us meet here.

VII.—INFIDELIS AND IMPIATOR.

FROM what I had heard and seen, you may think I took care not to be too late in attending the sable gentry in Horrida Vallis, where I was got before any of them arrived; and prepared for taking down their discourse, the first of which, that I heard, was by Infidelis and Impiator.

IN. How illustrious is thy throne! How extensive are thy dominions, O great Impiator, my son! Before you, the greatest grandees of the earth do bow. Will you please, my son, to finish your account of the remaining part of your territories?

IM. I will, sir; and you may observe that the fifth canton is that of the adulterers and fornicators. These are divided into literal and mystical. The class of literal adulterers and fornicators is so fashionable and notorious a people, that a description of them seems unnecessary; and so very disagreeable, that it would be offensive to you. I shall, therefore, do no more than describe their dwelling, and assure you, sire, that every individual of them is a very humble servant to your son Impiator. Their dwelling is on the banks of a river, the source of which is in the court, which runs through every part of the king's dominions, carrying the inhabitants along with it; and at last disembogues itself in hell, where all adulterers and fornicators shall infallibly be tormented, as a proper counterbalance for their fleshly pleasures; where, instead of women, they shall have devils; instead of wine, the sulphurous liquid;

and instead of beds of down, the boisterous billows of Phlegethon.

Next to them are the mystical adulterers and fornicators: by whom I mean all that have any commerce with the whore of Rome, that old bawd with the scarlet gown; or, in other words, all who have the mark of the beast, either on their foreheads or their right hands, and such who have this mark upon both.

By those who have the mark of the beast upon their foreheads, I mean the worthy preachers and hearers of the Arminian doctrine of the church of Rome; as also the strait-hooped gentlemen, who believe, with the charitable Italians, that there can be no true faith but that which they profess, nor salvation but in their community. The far greater part of the clergy belong to the former, and the good Sandemanians belong to the latter class of doctrinal papists, or mystical adulterers.

By those who have the mark of the beast upon their right hand, I mean the practical papists; the whole bulk of the holy catholic church, and besides them, all that do the works of the beast, after the example of that orthodox church. By the works of the beast, some understand every part of religion which is not founded upon Scripture institution. Such, say they, are consecrating of churches, and baptizing of bells; dedication of meeting-houses to certain saints or angels, as the patrons of parishes; the worshipping of saints and angels, by celebrating an annual festival in honour of their name; such are your observers of high festivals; abstinence from meat at certain seasons of the year; worshipping towards the east, as if God were not everywhere present; bowing at the name of Jesus, as if it was more august than that of Jehovah, &c. Such, sir, with many more whom I might name, are the mystical adulterers and fornicators.

In. Ay, but my son, you have not told me which are the fornicators, and which the adulterers; I want to hear that, for the one is usually distinguished from the other.

Im. Yes, sir, they are distinguishable enough; for the practical professed papists profess not the least degree of relation to Jesus Christ, as the head of the Christian church; but owning themselves to be the adorers of the whore, who

sits on many waters, are held to be the fornicators; whereas nominal protestants profess themselves married to Jesus Christ, as the great head of the Christian church; and notwithstanding this pretended marriage with him, maintain a doctrinal commerce with the whore of Rome; on which account they are to be held as the adulterers.

The sixth canton is the murderers' habitation, which is divided into two grand divisions. In the first are murderers of others; these are subdivided into petty cantons. In the first of which live the mental murderers, just upon the frontiers of the country. They are a people who, without just cause, are angry with their neighbours; this lambent flame they inwardly cherish, till revenge is begotten along with hatred, envy, and malice; with them, therefore, nothing is wanting but opportunity to destroy the reputation and life of the object of their hatred, with safety to themselves; but very often it happens that their hatred and revenge destroy their subjects, ere they have an opportunity of avenging themselves. The verbal murderers live next to them, in a very spacious country, because they are very numerous. By the verbal murderers I mean, those who withhold from the character of others the good which they do deserve, and speak of them the evil which they do not deserve; or even the evil which they do deserve, in a way, in which they would not wish others to speak of themselves, in like circumstances. I attend, for my part, in many companies, where the conversation cannot possibly be supported for a quarter of an hour, but at the expense of some absent acquaintance; and so fashionable is this in polite life, that it is become a proverb, "That scandal is the very life and soul of conversation." To this petty canton belong all tale-bearers, back-biters, railers, evil-surmisers, and particularly the very obliging gentry, who tack, But, to the end of all their encomiums on others; as "He is a good sort of gentleman, But—"or, "she is an agreeable lady enough, But—" where you may observe that little unintelligible word, But, stabs the gentleman and lady's reputation through and through.

Having past through this, you come into the country of those who murder with their looks. In this country you may see an eye to curse a man to hell and damnation, and an eye-brow call a man a scoundrel, and knock him down.

The Rev. Mr. Adam Gib, primate of the associate synod in Scotland, has lately had his heart wounded so deeply by the looks of some of his elders, that it is thought he cannot recover the stroke as long as he lives; but for the good of the public, he hath prosecuted them before the presbytery, who, without enquiring into facts, sentenced the reputation of the irreverend elders to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, to the consolation of the pious sufferer. As soon as you get out of this country, you come,

Fourthly, into a very extensive plain, inhabited by what may be called domestic murderers. A set of beings who murder with impunity, no suitable laws being provided against them.

Here dwells the parent who spends wastefully what should regularly support his family, so that his children are brought up in the most dissolute and irreligious manner, as a preparative to the most vicious practices; hence, whether the children prove virtuous or vicious, strict equity accounts the profuse and careless parent the murderer. Near to those murderous parents lives the lascivious husband, who estrangeth himself from his lawful consort, and frequenteth the company of lewd women. Many you may find here, who, as the very worst of felons, rob their wives and children of their legal property to support the most infamous strumpets, who, like the horse-leech, are continually saying, give, give. Such men are sure to find the truth of that saying, "A whore is a deep ditch." Here it is a very common thing to see the most virtuous women so ill used by their murderous husbands, that they languish and grieve under their affliction, till at last they die of a broken heart. No assassin ever better deserved the gallows than such husbands, for no assassin ever put the person whom he murdered to equal torture. The very same may be said of the lascivious strumpet, of high or low degree, who is false to her husband.

Among domestic murderers live the parents who, for the sake of an agreeable settlement, oblige their children to marry with persons whom they cannot possibly love. This lays a sure foundation for certain murder, and brings the party to the grave in the most distressing manner.

But if covetous parents would only consider, that a compelled marriage is worse than a poisoned dagger plunged

into their bosom of their offspring, they would certainly have more compassion than to persist in the iniquitous measure. Here likewise live those who restrain their children from marrying the objects of their choice, merely because there is a deficiency of a few hundreds, or thousands, in the fortune. Parents who can relish nothing but money, and have a wrong notion of honour, make no scruple of conscience to render their children miserable all their days, rather than suffer them to marry a degree and a half below themselves. It is very strange, that the laws of nations should make no provision against this murder; and stranger still that those of Britain countenance and encourage it.

However, marriages are seldom happy where the affections are not joined prior to the matrimonial ceremony. Money may unite the persons, but it cannot unite the affections, as appears in numberless instances; of which disconsolate, dull, and heavy husbands, broken-hearted wives, frequent divorces, elopements, domestic quarrels, and divided families, the natural effect of forced marriages, are evidences.

There is yet another species of domestic murderers, connived at by the law. They are such who not only train up their children in idleness, but in luxury and wantonness. By these means their spendthrift sons, if of high birth, are fitted to become robbers of the nation when their own fortunes are spent; and if of middle life, they are fitted for the highway, and consequently for the halter. Nor is this method of training up less fatal in its influences on the female sex, for it prepares them for the stews, or the suburbs of the stews, where gentlemen's courtezans dwell, perhaps for theft, and then for the gallows. Idleness and luxury are as rank poison to the mind, as arsenic is to the body. Many people indeed lament the young gentleman's unhappy fate when he is going to Tyburn, but very few censure his parents, as the first cause of his untimely end, by the manner in which they brought him up. This is some comfort to us, however, that though such domestic murderers act with impunity from man, the law of God will take such notice of them, as to bring them to hell, if their crimes are not repented of. To be sure it would be more

agreeable to us, to see them enter hell by way of Tyburn; but the devil cannot always have his will.

Another sort are very careful to preserve the bodies of their children, by providing diligently for them the necessaries and conveniences of life; as they grow up, are as careful to preserve them from the highway and the stews, by putting into their hands a business by which to obtain a comfortable livelihood; and, after all, prove the murderers of their children. For, on the one hand, they restrain them not from bad company, which leads to destruction; company that corrupt the principles, vitiate the conduct, and lead into bad practices, such as sabbath-breaking, gaming, lying, and swearing, &c.: nor, on the other hand, do they take any pains to cultivate their infant minds farther than to know how, when, and to whom, they should make a genteel bow and courtesy, and how to express the modish compliments in a graceful manner. They never once deem it necessary to instil into their minds an early sense of religion and virtue.

Many parents, if their children learn a little polite behaviour, do not much care whether they read the bible at all.

In this country too dwell duellers, boxers, boasters, and provokers; all the bands of assassins, and intriguers against men's lives. His hoary holiness is captain-general of this band, also his cardinals and inquisitors are next to him in honour. Here dwell persecutors of every name; popish, episcopal, or presbyterian; all who impose religion on men's consciences by the power of the sword.

The second division is that of self-murderers; and I assure you, sir, this is a very populous place, more crowded than the former. Here dwell gluttons, drunkards, and intemperate persons in general; for there are more who eat and drink themselves to death, than the fever, the consumption, and the sword destroy. Idle, lazy, and slothful persons, live here under the character of second-hand murderers, their idle habits introducing diseases of the most fatal nature. The immoderately careful also, kill themselves with mere anxiety. In the next town the envious are stationed; those who are as mortally wounded by the prosperity of their neighbour, as any man can be by a dagger. In

the suburbs live those whom we call the impatient, for trouble is not so very deathly, as impatience under it. Over the bridge live the ambitious, a people of lofty views, who crack their heart-strings by climbing. In the neighbourhood of the latter live the lascivious, who kill themselves by little and little, and parboil their flesh, ere they present it to the worms. I might add to this list a prodigious number besides, known amongst us by the name of soul murderers; but as I was never very remarkable for knowledge in casuistical divinity, I shall leave this to others, and proceed to,

The seventh and royal canton of drunkards; which is divided into two very grand divisions, the first of which is inhabited by the sot, and the second by merry companions. The soaking sots are a well-seasoned race, who seem as if some of their ancestors had been of the bristly kind. They are a swinish set of people, always grunting but when their lips are in the cup; unless it may be, that the calf mounts them in the morning, and rides them till half-past two, then dismounts just in the middle of dinner, and the eager swine vaults into the saddle, and rides them till they are lame. The ensign of the sots' division, is a long tobacco pipe, and greasy fore breasts of a coat; and if any man have business with them, he would do well to wait on them in the morning, before the calf dismounts; for after that they can do nothing but grunt, till sleep dismount the pig again; thus they are ridden alternately by the calf and the pig. The sots drink merely for the sake of liquor; and in process of time their blood becomes so inflamed, that they carry the arms of their company upon their faces, which are dyed into a kind of bastard scarlet colour, and grow as rough as the skin of a shark, with preternatural pimples.

The second division is that of merry companions, or according to men of learning, good fellows. They abhor the name, yet love the practice of drunkards; you could not affront them worse, than by telling them, they are in love with the landlady for the sake of her liquor. Were you to ask them their reasons for frequenting the tavern, they would soon tell you, that it is not for any love they have to the liquor, but they go there merely for the sake of good company. By the way, sire, they go to the wrong

place to seek for it, for no good company haunt taverns and alehouses. Good company is most likely to be found in good places; but taverns and alehouses are quite of another cast, being public portals through which many pass to the nether regions. Yea, such a good opinion has Belzebub conceived of them, that many of the landladies and their daughters are appointed his factors and agents upon earth.

It is the practice of merry companions to meet at the tavern, or some other place of public resort, as many evenings in the week as business will admit of, to read and expound the newspapers, give their opinions of the proceedings of the ministry, of commercial transactions, or to comment on the operations of war. Sometimes they meet to play what they call a civil game at cards, backgammon, &c.; or it may be to reproach some neighbouring presbyterian parson for his affected sanctity: for you must know that they not only hate sanctity itself, but its very appearance. Often you may hear them deride the fanatic, for what they call his narrow and bigoted spirit; and, at the same time, applaud the reverend Mr. Liveloose, for an affable, free, and generous soul. Many of those merry companions, who will by no means bear the name of drunkard, I can pick you out, who will drink a bottle or two at a sitting, and go home betwixt one and two in the morning with eyes as fierce as those of a hyæna.

In short, sir, if you were to go through my canton of drunkards, when our men are all at work, you would hear as great noise as if Vulcan with his cyclops were there, hammering thunder-bolts for Jupiter; and would certainly imagine that hell had burst its belly and poured out its entrails amongst us, on account of the hideous cursing, swearing, damning, sinking, scolding and bawling, tearing and fighting, boasting, lying, cheating, and unclean words, looks, and gestures, which there abound. This, sir, is the royal canton, out of which I choose all my principal men; which you must own to be sound policy, for if ever I can get a man to become a drunkard, I can cause him to commit what wickedness I please; and I must tell you, that his canton is inhabited by men of all ranks, occupations, and persuasions.

Thus, reverend father, I have given you a brief account

of my dominions; but if you were to pass through the several cantons, and see them all yourself, you would say, that the hundredth part has not been told you.

In. Oh, my child! my dear Impiator, how my aged heart is filled with joy, on hearing your pleasing story. Illustrious indeed is the kingdom of Profanity. You honour me, my son! Your success does great honour to the name of Infidelis. But I pray, do you know any thing of a set of people whom they call Nazarenes? they are the only people in the world who have cast off my yoke. Oh! how it would rejoice me to hear that your craftiness had engaged them in your service!

Im. I know them very well. A small body of despised, precise creatures, hated by all the world. I assure you, sir, I have done all that lies in my power to bring them under our dominion. But mortified I am to tell you, that I have never been able to conquer one of them. Immanuel hath published very strict laws in his kingdom, absolutely prohibiting his subjects from touching, tasting, or handling any thing that belongs to us, or so much as visiting our cantons; and they are so firmly attached to his government, that it is with the greatest difficulty, now and then, we get one of them down into our mines. But when such a thing does happen, my subjects have a good day of feasting and mirth; send gifts to one another, of such things as they have; and the shouts of joy, "So we would have it," may be heard in all the cantons of our dominions.

For instance, it happened once that Noah, who was in the main an utter enemy to our government, was induced to make a visit to the drunkards' country, which caused much gladness through all the land. The triumphal flag was displayed upon the tents of Ham, wherever the news was spread, and every man reported to his neighbour, saying, "Behold, he is become like one of us." At the same time, the confederates of Shem covered themselves with sackloth, put ashes on their heads, exchanged their pleasant songs for lamentations, mourning, and woe; till the patriarch was safely returned to his own country again.

It happened also on a certain time, that I was happy enough to inviegle David the great within the borders of the adulterers' canton: who to cover the infamy of such an expedition, rushed with violent precipitation into the very

heart of the canton of murderers. The monarch's arrival was soon proclaimed among all the murderers and adulterers, who made a grand entertainment on the occasion, and invited the blasphemers to partake with them. Oh! Infidelis if you were there, certainly you would have tired your sides with laughing, to see how they footed the treble dance whilst the music played, "The best of them are as bad as ourselves:" and all joined together in this chorus,

"What we do in public, they do in private,
"The difference is only in show."

Then they clapped their hands, and shouted, "So ho! brave boys. Now we are all on one side. The man after God's own heart hath joined our communion. The psalmist of Israel is now one of ourselves. Hypocrites altogether, who pretend to more religion than others." Thus, sire, from the fall of one, our people concluded that all were bad.

The like fell out in the case of Peter, the apostle, who, on a very dark night, missing his way, was first trapped in the liar's snare, and then in the swearers' gin, so that he denied the Lord who bought him, and cursed and swore that he did not so much as know Jesus of Nazareth. I can tell you, when such a thing does happen that we entrap one of the Nazarenes, it greatly increaseth the industry of my subjects, and bends them more than ever under my yoke. Indeed, as there is no other way to Zion, but what lies directly through the very heart of my dominions, there is now and then one of them tumbles into our mines, especially in the dark and long nights of winter.

In. Now and then, child! I thought you had often companies of them at once in your dominions.

Im. No, sir, I cannot say so. I'll tell you how the mistake happens. We frequently have companies of those who are called Nazarenes, it is true; but then the name and the nature are two different things, all the world over. In order to bring true Christianity into disgrace, the great and wise Belzebub stirs up some of our country people to put on the outward habit of the Nazarenes, join their company, and travel with them, almost to the borders of the kingdom of Profanity; but not one of them can be persuaded to set a foot out of their own country. As those people pass along the road, in their own country, it is not

much to be wondered at, if they do occasionally try their hands at their old employments. But as for the real Nazarenes, I assure you, I very seldom meet with one who has curiosity so much as to view our land as he passes through it. Even when our subtle emissaries do entrap one, let me and my chivalry do what we can, we never detain him beyond a certain time; when some powerful messenger is dispatched from the skies, to deliver him out of our tenacious hands. But we have the satisfaction of often procuring them a hearty drubbing, so that many of them afterwards go halting to their graves. I myself have seen Immanuel meet them in the very midst of our kingdom, seize, bind, and chastise them, till with blurred faces, they humbly submitted to kiss the rod, and heartily blessed God that ever the birch-tree was planted.

In. Ay, child, they are made to kiss the rod, that is the plague of it; for then they bid farewell to the pleasures of Profanity. Oh! were it but possible, by any means, to harden them against the rod; what advantages might we reap from it! Or indeed could we, as I have often strove to do, make them faint under it; it would answer the same end: but, beyond all our power to hinder, Immanuel does some how, along with the stroke, convey sustaining strength. Yea, sometimes even makes the rod itself in some respects pleasant, and at all times profitable to them. Ah! my son, we shall never be able to rob him of one of his own, for when he chastiseth them with a visible hand, he sustaineth and comforteth them with a hand invisible.

But let us not be discouraged, nor yield the contest. Let us destroy whom we can, and let us disturb and distract the minds of those whom we cannot destroy. Let us think of the great Belzebub, what achievements he is daily performing, notwithstanding he groans in the yoke of eternal despair! And for your encouragement, my dear Impiator, let me tell you, such is your care to maintain a despotic sway over your subjects, and such is their attachment to your person and government, that both you and they may be assured of warm lodgings in the palace of Belzebub, as soon as this world ceaseth to be the stage of action.

Im. Yes, sir. Such is the flourishing state of my kingdom at present; but I have many shocks at one time and

another; it is but a few years since I was terribly afraid, lest I should have lost my British subjects.

In. Lost your British subjects my son! Who or what is he, who dared to attempt any thing against the great Profanity?

Im. Ah, sire! a powerful enemy, no less a person than George the Third. He was an enemy to my powerful sway when he was only prince of Wales, and as soon as he ascended the throne, he more openly shewed his dislike to me: publishing an edict for banishing me from his dominions, he enjoined his officers to apprehend me, wherever I was found; and, under the penalty of his displeasure, prohibited his subjects from entertaining me at any time, especially upon the sabbath day; a day on which I am used to get above double business done for Belzebub. Had I not been well defended by the British nobility, as well as by the commons of the land, bad days had come upon me, for what will not precept enforced by example be able to accomplish?

Had he, like many princes before him, only enacted laws against me, and still continued to correspond with me himself, I should have had little to fear; but, would you think it, sir, he actually attempted to clear the court of me; would suffer no swearing in his presence, nor gaming on the sabbath evenings in his palace, and even discouraged drunkenness and debauchery. Indeed, sir, if inferior magistrates had all been of the same disposition with their king, poor Impiator had been obliged to quit the realm, and live like the devil Crudelis.

In. That the king of England is a sober and virtuous prince, will admit of no dispute; but the case of Impiator can never be desperate whilst you and I are in such high esteem with so many magistrates and placemen. We shall be regarded much sooner than he. So long as inferior magistrates can be kept in subjection to us, there is no fear of our interest, let the prince be ever so virtuous. I, as an old stander in the world, have seen much of mankind, and out of my consummate experience shall offer some things for your encouragement.

A good king may enact good laws, but it is impossible he should execute them without the assistance of his sub-

jects; therefore your kingdom, my son, can never suffer, till a law be made, which shall render all common drunkards, swearers, sabbath-breakers, whoremongers, extortioners, &c. incapable of the office of a magistrate. Whilst magistrates can suffer buying and selling on the sabbath-day; whoredom, drunkenness, and swearing, to abound in the streets with impunity, what hath Impiator to fear? Doth it not demonstratively prove, that such magistrates are firmly attached to the devil Impiator? No danger, my son! no danger at all. Let the king and queen both abhor you ever so much, unless they can get men of virtuous dispositions established in places of trust, the devil Impiator shall reign in spite of all they can do to prevent it.

Do you think that a magistrate, who is himself a drunkard, will ever strive to suppress the beastly sin of drunkenness in others? Or that he who is a profane swearer, and tolerates the practice of swearing in his own household, will ever exert his power to suppress it in others? Can it be thought, that a man who keeps his woman instead of his wife, will be very assiduous to suppress the reigning sin of whoredom? Or that he who can without conscience grind the faces of the poor, will ever be a promoter of piety? Never fear it, Impiator. All you have to do, is to debauch the minds of as many magistrates as you can, then you will have the vulgar of course, when they see vice reign with impunity.*

Im. After all, sir, I think there is reason for some fear, when we consider the power of example. You remember how, according to tradition, it turned the heads of all the Macedonian army to the one shoulder, in the days of Alexander; and how it raised a hump upon most of the genteel backs in England, in the days of king Richard the Third, of bloody memory. Now, sir, if example were to have the like effect at present, Impiator could not live in England.

In. I am sensible, son, that a virtuous example is not without its proper influence; but this I have always seen,

* This second-sighted devil seems to have judged rightly of the case, for profaneness of every kind has made most awful advances in the present reign, notwithstanding the virtue of the sovereign. Divorces, consequent upon conjugal infidelity, were never so rife, since England became a nation. Masquerades and routs, which received but little countenance in some former reigns, in this, meet with all that the vainest heart can wish for. That this is the case, let Cornely's, the pantheon, and the female coterie, bear witness.

people are more easily drawn by example into vice, or even into things indifferent, than into virtue. Assure yourself it will require a stronger power than the example of the best and wisest of men, to draw a vicious person to the love of virtue.

Should the virtuous example of a prince have any influence upon others, you must take care to nick-name them, get them pointed and hissed at, and despised, and all will go on very quietly.

Let us go now in quest of our kindred, my son; I expected to have seen some of them here this morning.

VIII.—INFIDELIS, AVARO, FASTOSUS, IMPIATOR, AND DISCORDANS.

INFIDELIS and Impiator had but just done talking together, and were about departing, when Fastosus, Avaro, and Discordans came up the valley, and saluted each his kindred, in which salutation Infidelis thus began:

IN. Honour and renown to the great Fastosus! Furious contentions to restless Discordans, and heaps of glittering wealth to the careful Avaro! To which infernal salutation FASTOSUS replied, Darkness and confusion surround my brother Infidelis! lewdness and debauchery attend my cousin Impiator! I am glad to see so many of our family in the valley at once.

IN. I pray you, cousin Discordans, how do you do? these many weeks have passed since I saw you.

DI. Even jaded out of breath, uncle! How do you do, most reverend sir? And how do you, my worthy cousin?

IN. Having with great care caused our influences to rest upon our subjects, we came hither to the valley, to regale ourselves with a sweet dish of conversation, which we hope will now be more agreeable on the arrival of so many celebrated worthies. But I would know, cousin, where have you been so long?

DI. Been, uncle! I have been busy, wandering to and fro, on the face of the earth as usual, promoting the interests of great Belzebub. So diligent have I been, that I have had no time, since I saw you last, so much as to take a nap. But as you observed just now, having left my in-

fluences upon mankind, I hope to enjoy the pleasure of my uncle's company for a season.

In. How, cousin? are you so close at it? I thought your affairs had been urgent only upon certain occasions.

Di. Indeed, sir, mankind are fond of me, almost to distraction. I believe I have as much business now-a-days as any devil of the club, and I manage my affairs with as much dexterity too.

In. What is that staff you have in your hand, cousin? And what is that looking-glass, that hangs by your side? By your looks you are too vigorous to need a staff to lean upon; and to judge by the appearance of your person and dress, I should have thought you had as little need of a looking-glass.

Di. You are pleased to banter a little, sir; but that which is well received, is never ill delivered. This which you call a staff, sir, is my telescope. And this glass is my inverting mirror; the two chosen instruments by which I carry on all my operations.

Im. I thought, cousin, we devils had no need of glasses, either perspective or visual. What! is your sight bad, Discordans?

Di. No, no, my sight is as piercing as the eye of an eagle; but piercing as it is, I cannot do without my glasses.

Im. Then, I suppose, the glasses are for the use of your subjects. Indeed, cousin, I took you to be a friendly devil before.

Di. Not so friendly as you imagine, coz, nor are the glasses for their use, but for their abuse. For there is not one who makes use of either glass, but he is abused, as sure as ever he uses it. This is no very great friendship, sir, is it?

In. No, cousin; if so, you approve yourself the offspring of great Belzebub. I should be glad to hear something of their uses, and the manner of your operation by them.

Di. I am ready to oblige you, sir, if the great Fastosus is pleased to permit me.

Fa. You do me honour, my son. I permit you with all my heart.

Di. Then, sir, if you please, you shall try my telescope first. Take it in your hand, sir, and put it to your eye—Now, sir, what do you see?

In. See—I see the greatest mountain that ever I beheld—the top of it reacheth even to the stars. Strange! I did not think there had been such a thing in the world! Why, the highest mountain in Armenia is but a hillock when compared to this!

Di. Now, sir, be pleased to take down the glass; look the same way with your naked eye, and try what you can discover.

In. Nay, now I can see nothing at all, but a mole-hill about a score yards from us. But what is gone with the mountain think you?

Di. That very mole-hill, sir, is the mountain which you saw; to convince you of it, Impiator shall make the trial likewise. Now, Impiator, what do you see?

Im. See, why I see the wondrous mountain; and I see a prodigious number of monsters, ten times as big as an elephant, travelling up the sides of it.

Di. Now, sir, the mole-hill is the mountain, and the ants are the monsters that inhabit it.

In. Amazing! that any instrument can change the appearance of things so much from the reality. Indeed, Discordans, I can hardly believe my own eyes.

Di. Sir, you shall have full conviction. Put the glass to your eye, and mind well when I roll this ball on the green, and tell me what it appears to you to be:—Now, sir,—you have seen it, what do you say?

In. I am more astonished than ever. It appeared to be well nigh as huge as the body of Saturn, and seemed to roll through immeasurable space. Now I am convinced, incredulous as I am.

Di. All is well so far. Now you shall try the other end of the telescope, and learn the wonders of miniature. Let us look towards the other side of the valley. You see a very large oak, whose arms are extended at least two hundred feet in breadth; Do you not see it, sir?

In. See it! How you talk! I might see that tree without spectacles, if I were three-fourths blind.

Di. Be not too positive, sir. Take a good view of it now, lest you should not readily apprehend it with the glass.

In. Why, cousin, I cannot fail seeing this tree at the first trial, it is such a large one, and just at hand too.

Di. Well then, please to put the glass to your eye the contrary way to what you did before—Now, sir, what do you see?

In. I can see nothing at all. What is become of the tree, think you?

Di. Look better, sir. The tree stands just where it did, I assure you.

Im. I suppose my father has not the glass right at his eye; has he, cousin?

Di. Yes, yes, it is very right. Do you discover any thing of the tree yet?

In. No—nothing at all; is not the glass fallen out, think you?

Di. No, sir; the glass is all right. But tell me, do you see nothing of any kind?

In. Yes, I see at a prodigious distance some kind of a shrub, about the size of a common thistle; to me it appears to be about fifteen inches high.

Di. Look steadfastly at it, sir—and see if you can find out what species it is of.

In. I take it to be a small oak plant, but at such a distance, it is not easy to distinguish the species of such a diminutive shrub.

Di. Now, sir, I perceive you discern it right; if you please, you may take down the glass. You see, sir, the oak tree stands just where it did; and now you can discover nothing of the shrub. Believe me, sir, the plant which you saw is none other than that stately oak, magically diminished in its appearance by the power of the glass. The oak itself hath undergone no change, neither did the ball nor the mole-hill. All the change is only in appearance.

In. I am amazed at the astonishing powers of this instrument: when it is used one way, it magnifies a mole-hill to a stupendous mountain, and a tennis-ball to a world; and when used the contrary way, it reduceth an oak of the most gigantic stature into one of the most dwarfish shrubs. I pray you, cousin, what is the name of this instrument? And where was it invented?

Di. Sir, the name of this amazing instrument is Prejudice; it was invented by Lucifer, the most famous mathematician in hell; is of excellent use in forwarding

the delightful works of darkness, and securing the dominion of Belzebub over mankind upon earth.

In. Dear cousin, I am quite impatient to have a description of its uses: it cannot fail being of excellent service, if skilfully managed, as I doubt not it is in the hand of Discordans.

Di. Sir, having already seen something of its amazing effects, you may well believe it is very useful to me. By this partial glass it is, I sow contention, strife, and discord, wherever I come. It is my custom, when I begin my operations, and intend to set people together by the ears, to visit each of them separately; apply my glass to his eye in the magnifying way, and, as you see it is so constructed that it will turn any way, I turn it towards himself, by which he obtains a partial view of his own virtue and merit. Then I apply the glass in the contrary way, and direct my dupe to consider his vices in the diminishing medium, by which he almost, if not wholly, loseth sight of them. Having had such a partial view of his own virtues and vices, the fool takes the former to be a thousand times greater, and the latter a thousand times less, than they really are; by these means he is prejudiced in his own favour so far, that he is ready to quarrel with all who think not so well of him as he does of himself.* Thus I prejudice almost every man in his own favour so far, that each looks upon himself as most worthy of general regard. From this it is, that you may meet with a drummer, who looks upon himself as more able to command well than his colonel; or a catchpole, who deems himself fit for an alderman; and a scurvy attorney, who flatters himself that he knows more than the lord chancellor of the realm.

But for this prejudice in their own favour, you would never hear of revolutions of state, destructive wars, cruel assassinations, and domestic broils amongst mankind, so grateful to us infernal spirits. 'Tis by this device, you will find one fool wiser in his own conceit than ten men who can render a reason. Yea, gentlemen, it is from the good opinion almost every man hath of himself, originally derived from the use of my partial telescope, that all divisions and animosities of every kind, and amongst every people,

* A recent instance of this effect of self-esteem, the author met with in his nearest religious connexions, which he thinks meet to add to those instances of more ancient date.

in church and state, do flow. Though, indeed, the gentlemen concerned in religious contentions would persuade the world, that it is the glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel they have in view, in all their curses and anathemas, which they toss and retoss against one another; the vulgar take it for granted to be so, and therefore readily join with their reverend leaders.

In the mean while, man being sufficiently prejudiced in his own favour, I betake me to the following operations, from whence all jealousies, back-bitings, murmurings, evil surmisings, &c. spring. I put the diminishing end of my telescope to the eye of my dupe, and direct him thus to behold the virtues of his neighbour. The instance of the oak reduced to the most diminutive shrub, will convince you that a man's virtue will appear little enough, if at all discernible, when viewed with my partial glass. So when the man with it examines the virtues of his neighbours, he is put to his wit's end to find any virtue at all, just as you were to find out the oak: but he sees, as he thinks, too much cause to conclude that his neighbour is a very bad man. And if such a thing should be, that a man's virtue is so strong that it forceth evidence, even over the belly of prejudice, by its own native lustre; its appearance is changed from its reality, as the oak to the shrub in the foregoing experiment.

Then I direct my disciple to apply the magnifying end of the telescope, and to take an ample view of his neighbour's vices and deformity; and this he doth to the greatest advantage; the two instances, of a mole-hill transformed to a mountain, and a rolling ball to a revolving world, will convince you how glaring any man's vices will be, when viewed with the magnifying end of my valuable telescope, Prejudice.

On obtaining this discovery, says my dupe, "Ah! how glaring his vices appear! when I sought for virtue, I could not discern so much as the smallest of her traces in him; but now I seek for his vices, truly there is nothing else to be seen. Can this man be a Christian? No, surely! If this be Christianity, I will for ever renounce it." Thus, my very reverend uncle, I frequently persuade people who are really worthless, to despise, revile, and contemn those who are in every respect much preferable to themselves; to

deny the character of virtuous men, even to the most virtuous of their day.

In. Now, nephew, you delight my ear indeed; and I freely own you of my illustrious kindred; nor are you less dexterous in pursuit of your calling, than the greatest of all our fraternity; the great Fastosus and I only excepted.

Im. Gentlemen, I have been silent a long time, which, I believe, I am as little given to as any; but now wonder unbraces my tongue, and I cannot but admire the art and industry of my cousin Discordans.

Di. Although I am no way remarkable for gratitude, I thank you, cousin Impiator, for your compliment. There is this glass, which likewise demands your attention; will you please to examine it, gentlemen?

In. Come cousin, I will; please to let me look at it.

Di. Now for a fresh surprise. Do you please to place the mirror, and look into it.

In. I will, cousin. But what is the matter, think you? I see nothing but gross darkness. How comes this to pass, Discordans?

Di. It is the nature of the instrument. Be pleased to turn yourself so as to look upon either or all of us in it. Now, sir, what do you see?

In. Strange! you all appear as angels of light. Did I not perfectly know the contrary, I could have sworn upon the alcoran or the mass-book, that Impiator had been Uriel; Avaro had been the genius of Benevolence; that Fastosus had been Humility; and you, Discordans, the angel of Peace.

This glass is really more wonderful than the former. What an amazing power of inversion it hath, cousin! Why it transformeth light into darkness, and darkness into light; changeth the appearance of devils, into that of angels of light. Well, Discordans, if this will not answer your end, I do not know what will. I pray you, cousin, what do you call it?

Di. This, sir, I call my inverting mirror; but the proper name of it is False Reasoning. An instrument of the true Luciferian construction, and most admirably adapted to my dividing purposes. It is the oracle at which, for the most part, mankind inquire after the truth of any matter; but from what you have seen, you will readily believe

that there is no truth in it; therefore its discoveries, if the truth were known, would be deemed absolute falsehood. But I am very careful to keep up its honour with the people, as I could do but little business without it.

Fa. Right, my son, and it proves to be in high esteem; for the ancients were not more fond of our brother Apollo, who kept his court at Delphos, than the moderns are of the inverting mirror of false reasoning.

In. Good cousin, a word or two concerning its uses: yea, make an oration of it, if you please; for it will be very agreeable, even to Impiator himself, I dare say.

Im. No danger of me, I assure you! I begin now to have some taste for information, all that I have heard being so very agreeable. Cousin Discordans, you may freely proceed, without any fear of bearing too hard upon my patience.

Di. But for this inverting mirror, gentlemen, I could do but little against the children of men; for excellent as my telescope of Prejudice is, it would be altogether useless but for the mirror: but, by the help of this, the telescope performeth mighty deeds in favour of our government.

By this mirror it is I cause offence to be taken when none is offered, nor designed; yea, even when the good of the party is sought after; and thus I foment differences, amidst the most fervent solicitations for unity. A certain great man, some thousand years since, had such a proof of this, that he complained bitterly against our people, saying, "When I am for peace, they are for war."

By this mirror it is, that public or private reproof is not only rendered useless, but even hurtful to the party reproved, and frequently prejudicial to society. So very much are people given to examine all matters in our famous mirror, that it is almost impossible to point out one man in a whole county, who hath wisdom enough to bear reproof with becoming patience. So that if it is an argument of folly, to turn away the ear from reproof, or to harden the heart against rebuke, these are brave days for folly.

By this wonderful mirror, I make even the preached word not only useless to many, but offensive to some: for instance, it sometimes happens that the preacher, as it is his duty, exclaims against drunkenness; at that instant I step up to the drunkard, and hold the mirror before his eyes; immediately he begins to view the parson's conduct in a

very uncharitable light: and as a guilty conscience needs no accuser, he concludes it is himself that is aimed at. "Well," says he, "I see how it is; some spiteful person hath told him that I was drunk the other night, and he is wicked enough to expose me to all the congregation. Has he no faults of his own, that he can be so free in trumping up other people's failings? Cannot he preach the Gospel without railing against individuals?"

In. I have often seen it to be dangerous to our interest, for a person to go with a guilty conscience to where there is a faithful ministry.

Di. By this time I clap my telescope to his eye, and direct him to view the parson with it; which is no sooner done, than he exclaims, "Ay, ay, his vices are as great as mine! and greater too. If he is not a drunkard, he is something as bad; he is covetous, all know that; and he is uncharitable and spiteful." Then I turn the end of my telescope towards himself. "Well," said he, "the parson himself is more wicked by one-half than I am; I meddle with no man's character, I am in charity with all men.—I am just and honest in all my dealings. If I hurt any body, it is myself; and what can the meddling fellow have to do with that?"

Thus doth this wonderful instrument invert the nature of things, so as to turn a well-meant admonition into a piece of envious raillery; what is really in itself a virtue, is changed in its appearance to a vice; and if the least degree of zeal appears in the delivery of reproof, it is traduced as passion and ill-nature. By the use of these two famous instruments, I set one great man to pull the ears of another, at the various courts of earthly princes, where by my management the truly worthy are frequently disgraced, and the worthless advanced to power. What ups and downs succeeded each other in the court of Versailles, in the days of madam Pompadour, when not the merit of the hero, but his attachment to that lady, was considered! If he was a true Pompadourian, he was sure to be advanced, however much of the calf his disposition had imbibed: but if an anti-pompadourian, down he came, though he were as wise as Ulysses, and valiant as the son of Thetis; and so it fared with them in their bad success in the late war.

Fa. I suppose the public would never object to their

prince enjoying the common privilege of man, in having a favourite friend near his person; were it not that the party selected for that purpose is apt, insolently and inconsiderately, to crowd his own dependants, qualified or unqualified, into places under the government. But what France suffered for such misconduct in the last war, will be a warning to neighbouring nations.

In. I should like to have the history of your glasses, cousin. And I imagine a few instances of your operations by them will be exceedingly agreeable to all the company, if you will be so obliging to favour us with them.

Di. With all my heart, sir. The first instance I remember, was in the case of Cain and Abel. As for Abel, you know, he was a rebel against our government, enlisted under the banner of Immanuel, and bore arms against the monarch of darkness, to whom trusty Cain was firmly attached. Abel was well acquainted with the acceptable atonement then to be made by Jesus of Nazareth, and had respect to it in all the services which he offered to Deity: his sacrifices and services were therefore the fruits of faith, and consequently acceptable to God whom he served. On the other hand, our friend Cain had no respect to the mediation of Immanuel, but considered his services as well deserving acceptance with Deity, in virtue of their own intrinsic excellence. Of course, both him and his services were rejected; for, you know, whatever is not of faith is sin, and consequently detestable to the Almighty. Abel offered his sacrifice, and Cain presented his gift; the one in faith, and the other without faith: the result was, Abel was accepted and Cain rejected.

As soon as I was aware of this, and saw discontent visible upon his countenance, I went up to Cain, and began to ply him with my instrument. "Let my lord Cain," said I, "try his brother's conduct in this faithful mirror;" accordingly he viewed it, and as he viewed, he said, "Ah! now I see how it is—he knew that a lamb or a kid would be more acceptable to God than corn; he would not inform me, I suppose, lest I should share in the blessing: is this acting the part of a brother? I see now through all his pretended love, his whining advices, and hypocritical cant."

This wrought just as I would have had it. Then I desired him to view himself with my telescope, which he did; and

thus exclaimed, "Why, I am a thousand times better than my brother Abel! I have as much righteousness in my one hand, as he hath in his whole person." Said I, "Now take a full view of your brother with this glass." He did, and as he looked, he said, "My brother is the most contemptible creature I ever beheld; I wonder not now to hear him complain of his unworthiness, as he does in his whining way." "Look again," I said. Then Cain said, "Why, Abel is so swelled with pride, that he cannot contain himself." "Look farther," said I. "Ay," replied he, "I see what he aims at. He thinks I shall be his servant, and no longer his superior as elder brother."

You know it is usual for my worthy friends, Envy, Revenge, and Cruelty, to follow me in most of my enterprises. It so fell out, at this time, that those three diabolians were present; but none of them attempted to speak a word, till Cain had viewed his brother Abel with my instruments, in a light the most disadvantageous to him that could be. But Cain having obtained this view of Abel, up comes Envy, and thus addressed him: "Friend Cain, I am heartily sorry for your disgrace, and am grieved when I observe to you, that it is my opinion you will never be able to endure your brother's greatness and prosperity, now he is accepted and you are rejected. I am much mistaken, if his ambition ceaseth to operate, till he enslaves you entirely under his yoke. I much fear that is what he aims at. Now, my friend, as you are the elder born, it is but reasonable that you should be ruler; but for the elder to be subject to the younger, is what I would advise you never to submit to." "Then," said Revenge, "if honest Cain will be ruled by me, he will make himself amends for all the grief he has sustained." To whom Cain: "I pray thee, thou sweet spirit, which way shall I do it? Shall I burn his tents, destroy his flocks? what shall I do, to make myself amends?" "Do," said Crudelis, "what should you do? Knock him on the head at once:" "Else," said Envy, "he will be an eye-sore to you all the days of your life."

Thus the matter was determined; and, accordingly, Cain took an opportunity one day in the field to murder him. In this instance, Abel's virtue and faith were considered as vicious craftiness; his sincere aiming at the glory of God, and his self-denial, were by my inverting instruments inter-

preted pride and ambition. Deluded Cain revenged himself not according to reality, but according to his own jealous suspicions and groundless surmises.

In. Realities seldom appear, Discordans, where you reign, or your operations would not be so successful as they are in common.

Di. True, sir, there is no possibility of maintaining strife and contention, but by inspiring one man with mistaken notions of another, and each with a good opinion of himself. This is the spring of all contention.

I remember, I made rude work between Jacob's wives; I think their names were Leah and Rachel, the daughters of your friend Laban, Avaro: and that too, for what neither one nor the other could possibly help. Rachel was plump, fair, and beautiful, but withal for many years barren. Leah was less beautiful, being afflicted with tender eyes; and from these two sources, I let the world see the inconvenience of polygamy or bigamy. But, to pass from the discord of the women, I come to their sons, amongst whom I made a pretty sort of an inroad, which for a season yielded me exquisite pleasure.

You must know it is always more pleasure to me, to stir up discord among the good and virtuous, than any people whatever; although, by the way, it is much more irrational in them to quarrel with one another, than for those who are strangers to equal privileges. Yet such is my dexterity, that whilst they are in this world, I can make them very often behave to one another more like enemies than friends and brethren. However, they escape my tyranny the moment they forsake their clay, and I am for ever banished from their peaceful mansions in the other world.

To return to my story. Young Joseph, son of deceased Rachel, was his father's favourite; and the fond patriarch, to evidence his distinguished regard to him, clothed him in garments of many colours. This badge of affection sat very uneasy on the minds of his brethren, who, to a man, resolved to teach future parents the folly of partiality towards their children; yet had conduct enough to bridle their resentment, till a favourable opportunity should offer. It was not many years before an opportunity offered; for Joseph had a dream divinely inspired, of which I made very suitable improvement. He dreamed, "that he and his brethren

were all reaping together in the field, and lo! ere he was aware, his sheaf stood upright in the midst, and all his brethren's sheaves stood round and made obeisance to it."

Young Joseph, suspecting no harm, in his simplicity told his dream to his brethren. Not long after, he dreamed that the sun, moon, and eleven stars, made obeisance to him; and in the same simplicity of heart told his brethren this dream also; never once suspecting that they would comment upon it to his injury.

At this time I happened to make a visit to them; and having the matter without reserve laid before me, I requested them to examine it with my instruments, as you know I am never backward, when there is any hope of business. As they examined it, they were unanimously of opinion, that the haughty boy was but too sensible of his father's over-esteem for him. "Vain youth," said they, "he can think of nothing but being lord over his brethren; it is evident, from his repeated dreams, his mind runs upon it through the day; for what people ruminate in the day, they are apt to dream of at night." Such was the sense my mirror gave of the affair. Then said I, Gentlemen, be pleased to survey the matter with this telescope, meaning Prejudice. They did so, and said, "Did ever any body see such a haughty presumptuous youth, as this stripling of a brother of ours is? It may be, the young ambitious wretch feigned his dreams, the more easily to introduce his supremacy! He be our lord! Must he? His pride is boundless. It is not enough that he hopes to lord it over his brethren, but his old father must, it seems, make obeisance to his arrogance."

It was now I called on my brother Revenge to appear; to whom I willed them to make their case known. This they did; and he, without hesitation (as you know he is a ready-witted spirit) gave them his advice: "Gentlemen," said he, "the fact is evident; but why do you perplex yourselves? You have it in your power to prevent his aggrandizement; yonder he comes, and here is a pit hard by; drown him in it, and see what will become of his dreams." "By all means," said Envy, "for you see the old man is so doatingly fond of him, that he is ready to take his dreams to be divinely inspired; and the more foolish the youth can dream, the fonder his father is of him; so that it is now,

if Joseph is well, he cares little what becomes of the rest of his children."

The sons of Jacob in part followed our advice; they cast Joseph into the pit, which happened to be dry. But the angel of compassion wrought so far upon them, that they spared his life, sold him to a band of Ishmaelites, who were to take care to dispose of him in a foreign market, far enough from home. So you see it was by the help of my incomparable instruments Joseph was separated from his brethren.

In. If right reason had been director, they would have allowed it possible that God might speak in a dream, or in a vision of the night, to the lad; that it was time enough to punish him, when he actually became guilty of usurpation. But in your way, right reason is quite out of the question, cousin.

If agreeable to the great Fastosus, I hold it good we disperse for the present, that our affairs on earth be not neglected; and let us meet here to-morrow morning for fresh conversation.

Fa. It is very agreeable to me, sir.

IX.—FASTOSUS, INFIDELIS, IMPIATOR, DISCORDANS, AND AVARO.

It was my business to mind the appointment, and give due attendance; which I resolved to do, whatever should be the consequence. Accordingly I was there ere the arrival of the infernal gentry, whom I waited for with impatience. At last they all came up the valley to the place of conference, where five sable thrones were ready to receive them. As soon as seated, the following converse began:

In. Indeed, is it possible, that my lovely Impiator hath so far prevailed, as to make a reverend vicar drink till he is fuddled? Such a conquest as this makes greatly for our interest; for when the parishioners know that the parson himself was drunk in the week, they will pay little regard to his sermon the ensuing sabbath. Let him preach repentance and reformation with all the zeal he may assume, every hearer will say in his heart, "Physician, heal thyself." I always knew that you, Avaro, had large dealings with many of the clergy, but not till now, that my son Impiator had

obtained such great power over them. What! and swear too! To see a person get drunk, or to hear him profanely swear, would give joy to the devil himself, amidst all his disappointments. I assure you, in the days of the puritans, I would have crept forty miles on my hands and knees to have heard the one, or seen the other. But thou, my son——

Im. Indeed, sire, you may depend on what I say. Great and formidable are my enterprises. These eyes of mine have seen the foot-ball thrown down at the church door on Sunday after service, in the presence of the parson; who, like the father of his people, gathered up his gown, and stood patiently to see which of his flock could with greatest dexterity make it skim the sky. This, you will say, was a pretty sort of transit made by the holy man, from worshipping the God of heaven, to serve the famous devil Impiator. Ah, gentlemen, were I but an eloquent spirit, I could tell you such wonders about the profaneness of both priest and people, as would rejoice your hearts, and make you confess that few devils have more ascendancy over mankind than myself. O! the young students who are training up for the ministry are charming lads. It is but a few years since a nymph, who had been under the tuition of some of those young clergymen, came to an overseer of the poor of the parish, near a certain university, and desired to speak with him. "What is your will?" said he. "I am with child," said she. "I see that," returned he; "but who is its father?" "Three gentlemen of —— Hall," said she. "What do you talk of three for," said he, "only one of them can be its father." "Indeed, sir, they are all three the fathers of my child, and are all willing to give security to the parish: and three very civil gentlemen they are, I assure you." "I think," said the overseer, "they have not behaved very civilly to you, seeing you are with child by them." "O sir," said she, "they behaved very civilly to me; they got me to their room, and kept me there for above a fortnight, and all the while I ate with them and slept with them at free cost."

Av. Well, but brother, can you assert that as fact upon your own knowledge?

Im. Yes, Avaro, I can; and, more than that, the overseer is yet alive, and can at any time attest the truth of it.

In. Well, I think they are hopeful gentlemen of which to make ministers of the Gospel; gentlemen who may be of great service to our government.

Im. It is on that account I mention the affair. And I could tell you a hundred such pretty little stories.

Fa. Supposing my reverend brother Infidelis, for the information of these younger devils, were to relate part of his history, might it not be well?

In. I am ready to do any thing that tends to the prosperity of our common cause; with a view to this, I have already given Impiator some account of my birth and first enterprises, and now for common instruction shall proceed. Having ascended the throne of infidelity, the first thing I attempted was to lull men into a persuasion that I did not at all exist, and that there is no such devil as unbelief in being. When I could not so universally prevail in this as I wished, I endeavoured to persuade each of them separately, that however Infidelis might reign over others, for their part, he had no dominion over them. For, said I, you have a good heart, and have believed well all your days. Although, as I said before, I have conducted many of those, who fancied they had believed so well in their life-time, very safely down to the chambers of horrible despair, where they were soon convinced they had never believed at all aright.

Then I endeavoured to persuade the people, that the threatenings of God's law against sin ought to be considered as a fancy; and to strengthen this doctrine, I thus preached (for, you must know, I have been a great preacher in my time): "Look you, you timorous-minded mortals; you may clearly see, that God hath created you with all the passions and appetites that attend you; and can you believe that he did this with a design to prohibit the gratification of them? No, surely! Could it be consistent with the character of that God, whose goodness is unto all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works, to endue you with these passions and appetites, and then damn you for gratifying them? No, no, those threatenings are exhibited only to keep your consciences in awe; but never designed to be rigorously executed.—The law will make large allowances for the inclinations, passions, and infirmities of human nature; never fear it. The soul that sinneth, need not to fear dying as the Scripture has threatened; and man shall not be cursed,

though he continue not in all things written in the law to do them."

Here, gentlemen, you may see my fallacy in dealing with mortals; for although all the faculties and passions of the soul were indeed essential to its creation state, none of them were then irregular; none acted from improper influence, for every passion centered in its lawful and proper object. Besides, all sinful motions and desires of the heart are the effects of my dominion over man.

Then I proceeded to persuade them, that God hath forsaken the earth, and took now no notice of the deeds of men; so that every man might, with the greatest safety, gratify his peculiar inclination. By these means it was the great Impiator was brought into existence, whose dominion has increased every year with great rapidity.

I persuaded men, that this world is the most certain good. "A bird in the hand," said I, "is worth two in the bush." Make sure of this world, and never fear for the other. Do you consider this as your abiding place, and build your nest in its highest branches if possible. In this I succeeded so well, that every man by nature, and almost all by practice, look upon the present world as the chiefest good. Then it was that Avaro was born in our family, and Ambitiosus was born in the family of Fastosus.

All this, you must observe, I did in disguise, or rather in a state of invisibility. I dare not tell a man, when I wait upon him, that my name is Infidelis; for although they are fond of my nature, even to distraction, there is not one of them but what hates to be told that he is concerned with me. Indeed, you cannot affront any of my subjects worse, than by naming him after me, and calling him infidel.

Im. That is the very case with my subjects; for although they love my service with all their hearts, they hate to be told of it. If a man should at any time reprove one of them for his enormities, you would soon hear him damn the reprover for a methodist, or puritan, or a sanctified hypocrite.

In. It is no manner of difficulty for me to lurk unperceived by them, in the corners of their dwellings; but I cannot possibly hide myself from Moses, the vicegerent of the Highest. He is a person of a most piercing eye, and can trace all the motions of spirit; therefore it comes to pass,

that he and I have frequent bickerings. Moses being the perfection of light, and I the most consummate darkness, there is an eternal war proclaimed betwixt us; and we never meet but we are at daggers drawing.

Sometimes he comes knocking with a tremendous hammer at the doors and windows of my lodging, as if he would lay the house in a heap of ruin, whilst the people within start and tremble at every thunder-clap of his hammer. Amidst their consternation, you may hear him from without call to them within, with a louder voice than many thunders, in the name of his august Master, to bring forth the devil Infidelis and all his train to public execution. But I am always well befriended by the people of the house, who, for the most part, tell him that neither Infidelis nor any of his train live with them, and that his excellency must needs have mistaken the door. They tell him, he would do better to inquire at the house of Tom Drunkard, or Jack the swearer, where very probably, say they, that evil spirit may dwell.

This is often the beginning of a rupture betwixt him and them, for he is not to be so easily deceived; he shooteth his burning arrows with deathly vengeance in at the windows, against the people of the house, who I exhort, by all possible means, to resist to the last extremity. Never did you see the warlike Corsicans exert themselves with such ardour in defence of their liberties, as my subjects in defence of my government.

Sometimes they so besmear his heavenly face with the filth they throw upon him, calling him severe tyrant, covetous extortioner, unjust villain, and the like, that he gives over the assault, and leaves them to my quiet possession; then I take my seal, and seal them to destruction; for, you must know, it is but in some places he exerts his unfrustrable influence.

It is likewise observable, that although my subjects will give Moses a good character while he keeps at a distance from them, every one will fight to the knees in blood, when assaulted by him, ere they submit; so fond are they of my person and government. Sometimes it hath happened, that by irresistible force he hath broke open the doors, seized the people of the house by the collar, dragged them

to the brink of a pit called Despondency, into which he tumbled them headlong, and left them shut up in that dreary dungeon.

As soon as he is departed, I go to work, and turn some neighbouring brook into the pit, with a design to drown them, or throw down earth, stones, &c. on purpose to smother them: and so I continue to pester and disturb them, till I am frightened away by the sound of Immanuel's trumpet, as he himself approaches for their deliverance; for, you must know, I cannot stand my ground, but take to my heels, when he appears. Many a time do I hear myself cursed for a hellish brat, even by those who but very lately would have risked life and fortune, and with the greatest bravery fought, in the cause of prince Infidelis: but as soon as they obtain a glimpse of Immanuel's glory, they have done with my yoke, and I lose their affection for ever.

However, as I cannot endure that rational Scripture light should shine into the hearts of men, I have often been puzzled to find out proper methods to resist the power of Moses, for he is excessively turbulent sometimes, and frighteneth my subjects into a pretended service of his Lord. In order to appease him, the sons of men agreed to build a temple, and dedicate it to the Most High; rather choosing to worship him, than be destroyed by the artillery of Sinai. Accordingly to work they went, and built a sumptuous dome for divine worship, in order to stop the mouth of that never-ceasing accuser. Now, thought I, things are likely to take an awkward turn with me; if this worship is not interrupted, I shall lose many of my present slaves. So I put my plodding brain to the torture, in order to find out proper methods of prevention; and I can tell you, gentlemen, I went wisely to work; you remember that, Avaro, for you were my helper.

The case was this: We prepared the image of a woman, fair and beautiful to the eye; she was inwardly made of clay, and outwardly adorned with the appearance of burnished gold; in her right hand was a regal sceptre, titles of state, and plumes of honour, &c. In her left she carried a heavy purse of money, and a casket of Oriental jewels: upon her head was an imperial crown, studded with spark-

ling gems, which dazzle the eye of beholders, whilst they read the following motto, which was written in all languages on her forehead: "I am the mistress of the whole world." We secretly conveyed this image into one corner of the temple, and placed it in such a manner as to be seen of all who entered.

I soon perceived that the bait was suitably drest, and our idol had charms enough to attract the attention of the people. Ha!—ha!—ha! you would have laughed till your sides were tired, had you been there, to see how the slaves looked asquint upon the idol, as they approached the altar of God. Ay, and in the midst of their devotion, how they cast the tail of their eye towards the place where she stood. After their worship was over, O how they bowed and cringed before her ladyship; the very parson himself did her humble reverence, and many times embraced her in the most affectionate manner. Then said I, "A fig for Moses and all his threatening; I have the slaves as fast as ever."

Im. Indeed, sire, you played the devil with them then. But what said Moses—Did he calmly yield the debate?

In. No, no, he is none of your easy tempered people, I assure you; his eagle eye soon discovered the cheat, and as soon did he resolve on vengeance, as appeared by the event. Laden with burning faggots, he came to the temple, and roaring like many thunders, he said, the flashes of lightning bursting as he spake, "This people draweth near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; put away from among you that accursed evil, and worship the Lord with your souls as well as your bodies, with your hearts as well as your voices, or look for destruction even in the embraces of your idol."

This said, he hurled his brands amongst the people, and terribly disturbed many of them; indeed it was something alarming to see them look so ghastly, and tremble at his fearful menaces. In their first alarm they were for removing the goddess out of the temple, for fear of immediate destruction; but being a little recovered from their fright, the far greater part found such relentings towards her ladyship, that they could not bear the thoughts of parting with her, believing still, in despite of Moses, that her comely presence was highly necessary to render re-

ligion tolerable; and rather than part with her, they resolved to part with the temple of God itself.

Some few of them indeed were resolute for her removal, deeming the urgent command of the heavenly accuser not at all unreasonable: but their company was inconsiderable, and their strength inadequate to the enterprise; when they attempted to remove her, they could not so much as move her feet off from the pedestal; and notwithstanding the command was urgent, the far greater part of the people could not help, even in the midst of their devotion, looking towards the idol with an approving countenance; and there she stands to this day, adored by most, and a snare even to the virtuous and good.

Av. Great and manifold are the services which that ornamented idol hath done to our government, amongst both preachers and others; for many of the sacerdotal tribe have not the least view, in their preaching, beyond a genteel living, and farther preferment; to which end, adulation and flattery are more studied than the Gospel. If they can but get the world to smile upon them, they desire no more. Give them riches and honour, they may preach the Gospel who will for them. Let the people only pay their dues punctually, they may choose, for the parson, whether they will serve God or the devil; whether they will go to heaven or hell. Brave days, gentlemen!

In. Yes, Avaro, the times are not to be complained of; nor indeed have they been bad for many hundreds of years, if circumstances are duly attended to. But to my story. In process of time, men became sensible that, unless the heart were fixed upon God in acts of religious worship, their services could not be acceptable; but how to fix them they could not find. Being afraid the result of their inquiries might prove dangerous to my interest, if not interrupted, I advised them to make to themselves representations of God, in wood, stone, brass, or iron, but rather of silver, or gold; alleging that the more valuable the metal, the more acceptable the sacrifice would be.

The sons of men no sooner heard, than approved of my scheme, and resolved forthwith to put it into execution. Then, ere you were aware, every village was furnished with one or two god-makers, a set of artificers from whom our present saint-makers in Italy, Spain, Portugal, &c. are de-

scended; for modern times have not changed, but only given a different name to this craft, by which the popish parsons get their wealth.

But, alas! having never seen the shape of God at any time, they were obliged to form their images in the mould of their own fancies, which being various, it came to pass, that in one place the invisible Deity was likened to an old man, with a venerable long beard, grasping a bunch of reeds, which they called thunder. In another place he was represented as half man and half beast. Yea, so curious were the fancies of the artists, that in one place God Almighty was made like a fish, in another like an eagle, or hawk, and in another like a log of wood, and indeed sometimes like a beast with four feet. So very briskly was this trade carried on, that all who were able to buy, had, in a few years, one or more god-almighties of man's making in their own houses. The very same as our good friends the papists have got, almost every one, a saviour in his pocket or chamber. In the holy Roman church, you may find in every house a Jesus Christ of one kind or another; for, there, there be many sorts of Jesus Christs, as golden Jesus Christs, silver Jesus Christs, wooden, and even paper Jesus Christs, all made with as much craft as the ancient pagan gods.

Av. That trade of shrine-making among the papists is a good sort of trade; but I can tell you, it falls far short of the craft of saint worshipping, by which the priests get their wealth. Many a wooden saint there is in the holy church, which hath brought into the priests' treasury above six times its weight in gold. And indeed the pagan priests reaped equal benefit from their gods; from whence we learn that priestcraft hath been the same in all ages.

In. Some people there were, of more refined knowledge than their neighbours, who advised against the trade of god-making, saying, "We must not bow down to graven, nor molten images, nor in any wise worship them." My priests, according to my directions, answered as follows: "It is not the image which you worship, nor do you at all bow your knee to it; but being emblematic of the divine presence, it greatly assists you in your devotion." This learned reasoning calmed the consciences of most of the

dissenters; won them over to the religion by law established, and greatly wrought for the good of the church.

Di. Why, sir, that is the very apology which the papists make for image-worship, relict-adoration, &c.; but indeed it is no wonder, seeing their religion is one and the same with that of the pagan.

In. Some few there were, rigid nonconformists, who insisted that God must be worshipped in spirit and in truth; insisted that all idolatrous lumber should be cast out of the temple; by which the worthy clergymen of that age were so grievously galled, that they were forced, in a pious and tender manner, first to give up the heretics to the devil, and then put the flesh to death for the salvation of the soul: in the very same manner (and for much the same cause) as the holy Roman fathers excommunicated and burned the protestants. But the devil knows, to his sad experience, that the church has not half the power she pretends to; for out of the vast numbers which she hath generously given to him, it is but a very few he hath been able to receive; notwithstanding both the pagan, papal, and other churches, have hereby shewn the good will which, all along, they have borne to him and his interest.

Having fairly introduced idolatry, I tried, if possible, to lead them farther off from their Maker still; and for this end I brought in gods and goddesses a numerous train; for instance, if any man was more remarkable than others for murdering his neighbours, or for giving large gifts to the church, *i. e.* the clergy, I got him deified as soon as he died, and had worship offered to him in the same degree with saint-worship in the church of Rome; for saint-worship and hero-worship differ only in name.

Indeed it is but doing justice to saints in the Romish calendar, to observe, that the greatest part of them obtained their saintships for murdering of princes, massacreing protestants, robbing their heirs for the good of the church, or for raving-mad enthusiasm. Well, I went on and prospered, till I had brought all the world, a few individuals excepted, to worship the works of the mason, carpenter, blacksmith, or founder. Encourage but any trade, and it is sure to prosper; the god-making trade being universally encouraged, prospered exceedingly; for in a little time

there were national gods, much the same with the seven champions of Christendom, provincial gods, county gods, parish gods, and even household gods, to the great emolument of the clergy. I think, gentlemen, you must all allow that I have not spent my time in idleness among mankind.

Fa. No, no, brother, idleness don't suit you and me; we will leave it to foolish men and women so to spend their lives; but we will fulfil the old proverb in use among them, *viz.* The devil is never idle. Let them enjoy their idleness in this world, we shall very likely find them enough to do in the next.

In. I think it is something more than seventeen hundred and sixty years agone, that I had a trial of a very extraordinary nature to grapple with, such as I never had before then, nor ever shall encounter while I breathe the sulphurous smoke of the pit. Oh, it was a sore trial, gentlemen. Immanuel, a very dear lover of men, having sat on the circle of heaven for near four thousand years, with much relenting of mind, and longings for human happiness, from thence beheld the dreadful havoc I made in the world, rendering the whole posterity of Adam the children of wrath. Often did he call to the inhabitants of the earth to take me up, and burn me for a witch; but they were too much my friends to regard his advice: and indeed, had they regarded, it would have been an undertaking such as they could not execute without auxiliary strength. He sat long, and long he wondered that there was no friend to help against so potent an adversary. When at last he saw there were none to help, he arose from his jasper seat, and in a transport of love declared that his own arm should bring salvation. According to the high determination, he dismantled himself of the robes of manifest glory, laid aside his imperial diadem, which irradiates all the coasts of light, posted down to this world on the wings of compassion, resolving to conquer by dying.

Alarmed at such an unprecedented enterprise, I dispatched our swift-winged courier with all possible speed to hell, to inform my great father and the infernal divan of the astonishing event. As soon as Fame reported her story, the monarch summoned his peers to meet him in the flaming council-chamber, there to deliberate on the matter; and having maturely weighed every circumstance of it, it

was resolved to dispatch the devil Malevolus to Fastosus and me, with directions suitable to the occasion. That he, with Ambitiosus, Perfidia, Falax, and me, should take up our residence at Jerusalem, with the scribes, pharisees, and doctors of the law. We immediately obeyed our instructions, and succeeded admirably in our embassy. At the same time, Crudelis and Concupiscentia were appointed plenipotentiaries to the tetrarchical court of Galilee, where they received infallible testimonies of Herod's esteem.

Against the time that Immanuel was to be revealed, Herod admitted our cousin Suspiciosus to frequent audiences, of which the devil Crudelis, to his everlasting honour, greatly availed himself. He persuaded the tetrarch that, for his own safety, it was highly necessary he should kill, destroy, and cause to perish, all the children in Bethlehem, from two years old and under, in order that young Immanuel, who was formerly called the Ancient of Days, might be involved in the general massacre. This was the opening of our evangelic campaign; since which time, we have caused the shedding of as much Christian blood, as, if collected into one mass, would make a tide as deep as ever was seen at London-bridge.

At this time there appeared one John Baptist, a zealous Nazarene, and harbinger to Immanuel; he was likely to do great injury to our interest, therefore it was thought best to have him destroyed, which, by thy means, Discordans, we happily accomplished in part. Perhaps, Discordans, you can give a better account of that affair than I, as you were more deeply concerned in it.

Di. I do not know that, uncle; but I am ready to tell you what hand I had in it. You all know the man, and a trusty friend of ours he was, as any in his day. You know, he most inordinately loved Herodias, his own brother Philip's wife, and by the direction of our friend Concupiscentia, he added incest to his adultery, by taking her to his bed. It was about this time, that this famous Baptist, the founder of the sect called by his name, began his public ministry, and, fearless of man, exclaimed against all manner of uncleanness; for he was faithful to his commission. Well, this same austere Baptist took occasion one day, in the following manner, to reprove the tetrarch for his lewdness: "Herod," said he, "the God who made

thee, hath, for his own glory, exalted thee to the tetrarchical dignity; but, far from studying his honour, thou actest most unworthily, and turnest his goodness to thee into wantonness. Dost not thou know, that the same God who made thee ruler in Galilee, hath said, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery?' Put her therefore away from thee; if thou dost not, thou must expect that the Most High will mingle for thee the cup of his indignation."

I was then at the court of Galilee, and did not fail to improve the Baptist's admonition to the most fatal purposes. I transformed myself into the likeness of a grave courtier—a form very familiar to me—went up to the king, and held my inverting mirror before his eyes, bidding him to take a full view of the matter: thus as my humble servant, he did as I directed, and immediately said, "I perceive this field-preacher, this same Baptist, is an enemy to the Roman government; and because I am a friend to Cæsar, he hath taken this advantage against me; doubtless to prejudice the minds of the people, either to the divesting me of the tetrarchical power, or to the subversion of Cæsar's government."

When I had brought him thus to misconstrue the honest designs of the Baptist, I held my partial telescope to his eye, through which he looked with great attention; and as he looked, said, "What a presumptuous wretch is this, to take upon him to reprove me! Me, who am his lord and master, and can soon destroy both him and his father's house. Must Herod be reproved by this despicable fellow with the rough garment? Is it now so low with Cæsar's deputy, the tetrarch of Galilee, that he must mildly bear the insolence of every snarling peasant? No; it is inconsistent with our dignity to let such daring boldness pass with impunity. If a courtier, or nobleman clothed in soft raiment, had taken a little liberty with me, it might have been borne. But for this field-preacher—this Baptist—hah!"

By this time the great Revenge, that famous devil whose history is so tragical, thought it time for him to appear at court; and as soon as he judged it convenient, thus accosted the offended king: "My lord the king, if your highness suffer such insolence as this to go unpunished, your nobles will contemn you; every paltry priest will say, Yonder goes

the incestuous Herod: ay, the very publicans and Herodians will allege, that you are unworthy of the dignity you sustain, and all will censure your pusillanimity, in letting such daring insolence pass with impunity. Remember, my lord, that if wide-mouthed Fame should, as is very likely, report the matter in Cæsar's ear, it is ten to one but he will cashier you, either for your imputed incest, or your want of magnanimity. Sir, for your honour's sake, cast John into prison." Herod was easily persuaded, and John was committed to jail.

On mature deliberation, however, he was afraid of putting him to death, for he knew that the people had a good opinion of the renowned Baptist; therefore he lived in prison, notwithstanding Revenge made daily solicitation for his blood. On every occasion when he met with Herod, he thus accosted him: "Well, sir, is the Baptist dead yet? What! not yet, sir? What do you mean by sparing him so long, sir? I assure you, sir, he ought to die for his insolence. Sir, his crime is no less than high treason against your person." Thus he plied him daily.

It happened at a certain time, that Herod made a great festival in honour of his own name, which festival proved fatal to the innocent Baptist; for, ever since he had given offence, the devil Revenge had taken up his lodgings with Herodias the tetrarchess. She very well knew how foolishly precipitate Herod was wont to be in his wine, and how much his eye was to be allured with a well-performed dance, especially if performed by a handsome young lady. Not at all doubting but Herodiana her daughter would captivate the king, so far as to bring about the much-desired death of John Baptist, she decked her in superb array, instructed her what to ask if he should be pleased with her, then led her into the hall where Herod and his nobles were carousing. There she foooted the hornpipe with such exactness, that the mistaken eye of the tetrarch took her for a divinity, and swore that he would offer a great sacrifice to her, to the value of one half of his kingdom, if her highness would only deign to inform him what sacrifices were most acceptable to her. She replied, "Human sacrifices are my delight. Give me then the Baptist's head in a charger."

Now there began a horrid scuffle in the tetrarch's breast.

If he fulfilled not his oath, he thought he lost his reputation with his nobles who sat at table with him; and if he did behead John Baptist, according to his oath, he exposed himself to the resentment of the people.

In the midst of this scuffle, in came Revenge, and thus addressed the king: "I assure you, sir, John deserves a thousand deaths, for his insolence to your highness." "Besides," said Fastosus, who was then at court, "the great tetrarch hath no way left but this, to preserve his own character unblamed." Then cried Herod, "Who will go for us to prison, and behead the Baptist?" To which Crudelis replied, "Here am I; send me." Accordingly, having obtained Herod's consent (for we can do nothing against mankind but by their own consent), he went and beheaded Immanuel's harbinger.

Thus, gentlemen, you see, that by my famous instruments, False-reasoning and Prejudice, I cause offence to be taken where there is none intended. John only fulfilled his divine mission, and sought the good of the tetrarch, by calling him to repentance; but my mirror interpreted his honesty into treachery and insolence; which clearly shews, that it changeth the appearance quite contrary to the nature of things. But, reverend uncle, I prevent you proceeding with your story.

In. The cumbersome Baptist thus dispatched, we united all our forces against Immanuel himself, who was, by the Jews, called Jesus of Nazareth. Many were the conferences which we had with the Jewish rabbins, doctors, priests, scribes, and pharisees, in which all our debates turned upon that object of our common hatred. The high-priest, Fastosus, Malevolus, and me, were always placed at the head of the assembly, and every article was finally referred to us for decision. The venerable high-priest, addressing himself to me, asked what I thought concerning the pretensions of this Galilean? To whom I replied: "If it please your reverence, I think he is an arrant impostor; for his father you know, his mother you know, his brethren and sisters, are they not all with you? But," continued I, "when Messiah shall come, no man can tell whence he cometh, nor whither he goeth." Gentlemen, you will always know my style by its elegance, wherever you mee with it, should it be even in the volume of revelation.

Fa. I well remember these things, and the learned oration which at that time I made in the sanhedrim; and now we are associated in such a friendly manner, I have a good mind to repeat it to you. You have it in the following manner: "Hearken to me, ye righteous teachers of the law; the virtuous governors of the Lord's inheritance; and I will unfold to you a just state of the matter. You all know that the expected Messiah shall descend from a virgin princess of the lineage of David; but is this the son of a princess? Is his mother a virgin, being the wife of a carpenter?" Here you'll observe how I led them off from the truth, by attending to appearances rather than reality; for Mary, the mother of Jesus, was actually a princess of the line of David, though obscure, and actually a virgin when he was conceived, though after that the wife of a carpenter. Every circumstance attending his birth, corresponded exactly with ancient predictions recorded in the Bible; though by the way, it was by no means suited to the expectation of the Jews. But to my very great mortification I must confess, that, although the great men of the earth rejected him, the angels of heaven descended to hymn their new-born Lord. The constellations of the firmament shewed forth the birth of Messiah. Eastern sages heard the proclamation of the stars, and came to the city of Bethlehem, to offer oblations to the incarnate source of life.

So very clear indeed are the Old Testament prophesies concerning this affair, that the generality of the Jews were, at that time, in full expectation of the coming of Messiah; therefore it required great address sufficiently to blind their eyes, that they should not see and know him when he came; to which purpose my speech was wonderfully adapted. "You know, and all the holy rabbins know," continued I, "that Messiah shall come in power and great glory; shall break the iron yoke of Roman servitude from off your necks, and exalt the throne of David, his illustrious ancestor, high above the thrones of the kings of the earth; giving to his happy subjects dominion and great glory, subjecting to your government all those who wish your destruction. Worthy assembly," said I, "you have chosen the great Fastosus as your president and director; hearken therefore to me, and I will shew you my opinion concerning

your expected Messiah, and his appearance among you. It is most probable that, when he comes, he will be born of illustrious parents, in the family of David; and when grown mature in years, you may expect to see meet in him, a combination of all great and good qualities. By his wisdom and prowess, he will rekindle the martial spirit of the Jewish warriors, leading the armies of Israel to glory and conquest; and his throne shall be exalted above all the kingdoms of the earth. You may therefore expect that when Messiah shall come to your deliverance, you shall see an illustrious prince, attended by a warlike retinue, breathing vengeance against your enemies. But can this be him? Could the Messiah, think you, find nobody but poor shepherds to be the publishers of his birth? More likely, if Jesus had indeed been the Messiah, he would have made choice of your reverences for his heralds. Can it ever be supposed, my venerable rabbins, that an obscure person, attended by a few despicable fishermen, can have any legal pretensions to the vacant throne of illustrious David? Or can it ever be thought that the son of a Galilean carpenter, attended by a few of the riffraff of the people, is likely to restore the kingdom of Israel?

"Besides," continued I, "let him be what he may, it would bring dishonour on the princes of Israel, should they submit to be governed by the son of a mechanic.

"Who knows but the coming of Messiah may be yet more glorious, and ye shall see the heavens open over your heads; he shall appear in the firmament, guarded on right and left by innumerable battalions of armed seraphs, with whom he may descend and stand upon the mount of Olives, before he shall make his triumphant entry into the holy metropolis of Jewry. Then shall he dispatch his flaming soldiers, with full commission to kill, destroy, and cause to perish all such stubborn Gentiles who refuse to submit to the Jewish empire, now become universal. Your enemies all destroyed, great shall be your felicity and glory; for he shall reign among you in righteousness, peace, and glorious prosperity, unto all generations.

"To whom, my worthy rabbins, will he come, but to such a generation of righteous men as yourselves? Ye yourselves are witnesses of your own righteousness and devotion. None say longer prayers, none give alms more

publicly, than you do. So great is your zeal for religion, that ye rob widows' houses for the good of the church. So pious your example, that, my life for it, it will be imitated by the clergy in after ages. Your wicked ancestors fell very far short of your piety, for they killed the prophets, and stoned them who were sent unto them; but your reverences so far abominate their murderous deeds, that you build and beautify their sepulchres. You may safely conclude, that you are the righteous generation to whom the Messiah will come." Thus I swelled their expectations so very great, that when the real Messiah was actually among them, they reviled him as the worst of impostors.

In. The great Fastosus and me having shewed our opinion, the devil Malevolus was humbly requested to speak his mind. And he by this time was in a transport of rage; boisterously cried out, "Away with him, for an imposing villain! if he were the Messiah, would you ever find him coming out of Galilee? Search, and you will see that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet; neither can any good thing come from thence. Were I in your places, I would rather be subject to the Romans for ever, than suffer this fellow to reign over me. I hate his person—I hate his attendants—I hate his laws and doctrines—and, above all, I hate his pretensions to the crown of Israel.

"It were low times with you, indeed, if an obscure carpenter should be exalted to the throne, to reign over the Lord's inheritance!"

Fa. If I mistake not, it is time for us to attend our industrious subjects. Shall we meet here to-morrow at noon, brethren?

Al. Agreed, sir. We will meet.

X.—ALL THE DIALOGEANS PRESENT.

As soon as the infernal gentry decamped, I went home and found our parish priest at my house; I thought this a good opportunity of acquainting him with my adventure: but he concluded with the rest of my neighbours, that my brain was disturbed, and that those imaginary gentry were only the fruits of distraction. However, as I thought myself capable of judging between imagination and reality, I left the parson to his mistake, went to my closet to correct

what I had taken down in the former part of the day, and got all ready by next day at noon, to listen to the sable gentry. Exactly at noon they came, for I found them exceedingly punctual one with another. As soon as they were seated on their ebon thrones, they resumed their discourse; and Infidelis thus began:

In. It happened that the venerable rabbins held another council, to assist at which the devils Falax and Perfidiosus were invited. In this august assembly, the main thing to be considered was, by what possible means, right or wrong, they might persecute and destroy Jesus of Nazareth from the face of the earth. The great rabbins and doctors by this time began to fear that, if some decisive step was not speedily taken, all the country would become Nazarenes. This induced them to apply to those worthy spirits (who are known to be excellent contrivers), and fervently solicited their assistance. And as they are by no means bashful, they very soon gave the high sanhedrim satisfaction.

"Venerable rabbins," said they, "we are apprehensive that it will be very difficult to accomplish any thing against this Jesus of Nazareth, unless we can stir up enemies against him among those of his own household, and cause some who eat bread at his table to lift up their heel against him; for you all know his conduct is perfectly unblamable. Now we have at no great distance a notable limb of the devil, trained up in all the mazes of deep deceit and treachery, fitted for such perdition. Him will we persuade to ingratiate himself into the favour of Jesus, and to become one of his train. When this is done, he shall act the traitor, and betray him into your hands, nothing doubting but you will then take care to destroy his life, how innocent soever he may be."

"Certainly we will," rejoined the high-priest, "for it is expedient that one should die for the people." Accordingly the devil was dispatched to this son of treachery, whose name was Judas Iscariot, who being a plodding, covetous man, in hope of getting a bag of money, took his instructions from Perfidiosus, went and joined himself to the train of Jesus, and obtained a part in the apostolic ministry. In the mean time, we and the auxiliary Jews did all in our power to prevent the advancement of his evangelic

kingdom, by bringing the person and ministry of Jesus into as much contempt as possible. We represented him as a glutton, a drunkard, a Samaritan, a wizard; and in short every thing that was bad. His doctrine we represented as subversive of the law; notwithstanding we knew him to be holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners; that he came to magnify the law, and make it honourable. Because his works were such as carried their own evidence with them, and which could by no means be contested, we persuaded many of the Jews that they were performed by the power of Belzebub. Others, who were better informed, being stirred up by the devil Malevolus, out of pure malice fell in with the common cry, and defamed him as one who had intercourse with Satan: and thus they sealed themselves ours; as we need never fear losing a man after he is capable of such transactions.

Im. And who were they chiefly, father, who thus acted the devil's part so perfectly as to sin unpardonably?

In. Not the vulgar who knew not the law, I assure you; but men of priestly reverence, gentlemen in holy orders, gentlemen venerable for their erudition and literature; the doctors in divinity, the scribes of the law, the religious pharisees were the men, and their descendants have in every age been their humble imitators. It is unknown how much the devil has been obliged to gentlemen of the gown, and to scholiasts in general.

It happened in process of time, our friend Judas found an opportunity to betray him into the hands of the principal priests, for the goodly reward of thirty pieces of silver; for even Judas would not serve the devil for nothing. At the same time my son, Slavish Fear, who is a spirit of gigantic stature, fell upon and routed all his followers, so that none of them remained with him in his last temptations. As soon as Immanuel was seized and fettered, they led him in triumph to prison and judgment, where our steady friends, Hatred and Falsehood, were appointed witnesses against him in behalf of the commonwealth. So very hard did they swear against him, that he was brought in guilty of death, as had been agreed on before hand. As soon as the jury of priests brought in their verdict, the devil Crudelis, and Pilate who sat judge, arose and gave sentence against him; which for its singularity I shall repeat.

1. That the Jewish ploughers should make their furrows long and deep in his devoted flesh.

2. That his face should be marred with shame and spitting.

3. That his cheek should be bruised by the slavish hand of the barbarous smiter.

4. That he should be delivered over for farther torment to those who pluck off the hair.

5. That, in point of the greatest contempt, his temples should be torn with a mock crown of piercing thorns.

6. That he should be crushed to the earth beneath the weight of the cross to which he was to be nailed for execution.

7. That in his extreme torture he should have no drink but the sourest vinegar mixed with gall.

8. That in the most barbarous manner which devils, priests, and soldiers could devise, his mangled body should be stretched upon, and nailed to the accursed wood. And,

9. As unworthy of either, that he should be lifted up betwixt heaven and earth, a spectacle to devils and men, and there hang till he was dead.

As soon as the sentence was denounced, the devil Malevolus cried out, "Away with him,——soldiers, away with him—come, let us crucify him, his sentence is by far too mild—away with the varlet to Calvary." So they led him away to crucifixion.

At the same time our infernal nobility were struck with amazement at the seeming power which man had gained over Immanuel; and great Belzebub, in the midst of his astonishment, thus addressed his senators: "Once was the memorable time, that we made such an attempt to subvert the government of God, by resisting the power of Immanuel; but great was our defeat, and dismal our overthrow. Our designs were not only frustrated, but we ourselves, in the height of our confusion, fiercely hurled from the replendent summit of primeval glory into the yawning gulph of unfathomable perdition, where we are still reserved in these horrible chains, to the judgment of the great and terrible day; a day, the very thoughts of which make this noble frame of mine to tremble as the quaking asp. But how it comes to pass I know not, these earth-born sons of ours seem exceedingly to surpass us in power: for I saw

Immanuel stand fettered at their bar; dumb as a sheep before her shearers, he opened not his mouth. I am much afraid there is some hidden mystery in it.——What is this? ——My undaunted mind is not wont to misgive me thus! What can this unusual tremor which now invades my heart portend? I hate timidity—and yet I cannot help fearing, that this commotion of my intellects is ominous of some event fatal to our interest.

"I cannot deem it possible that the God of heaven and earth would patiently submit to such indignities, had he not some ends to answer by it, to which we at present are strangers. Often have I prophesied true: but O! may my prophetic mind be mistaken in its present timorous forebodings. Meanwhile, let us, my infernal brethren, harden ourselves in despair; for it is now long since Hope took wing and fled from these dreary mansions. Strong in fury, and fired with revenge, let us quit ourselves like devils and avowed enemies of righteousness. As for me, I hold it good that instantly we fly to the assistance of our devoted friends the Jews. Having this unexpected opportunity, let us not fail to improve it to the best advantage; let it not be owing to our negligence, if the state of Immanuel be not overturned. Let not us have the hell to reflect, that we omitted any thing which might tend to promote the interest of darkness."

Great Belzebub finishing here, and his motion being universally approved of, all the legions of reprobate angels, a few excepted, who were left to look after the affairs of the damned, took wing for earth, to assist at so very amazing an execution. Arrived at Calvary, they formed themselves into an invisible ring around the elevated cross, where, to their unspeakable astonishment and wonder, hung Immanuel the Maker of the world; and you may be assured they did not fail, as far as was in the power of fallen spirits, to torment his oppressed soul. Ay, Ay, so successful were we devils, priests, and soldiers that day, that no less was hoped for than a decisive victory over the Son of God.

But how shall I speak it? To the everlasting mortification of the infernal peers, just as Immanuel was to all appearance ready to expire, on a sudden he exerted his mighty power, seized old Belzebub, and dashed him against the

cross; then casting him to the earth, he so bruised the head of the serpent with his heel, that there is great reason to believe he will never recover as long as he lives. It would have grieved the heart of the very Crudelis himself, to see the abuse which our great and venerable parent received on that occasion.

Im. Well, sire, I cannot but think how truly the prophetic mind of Belzebub foreboded his misfortune: but what were the rest of the chiefs doing? Why did not all the veterans flee to his assistance?

In. A pertinent question indeed, considering by whom it is made, my son. But I assure you, we were never so greatly mistaken in our days as at that time. For when we thought ourselves sure of the victory, to our sad experience we learned, that Immanuel was strongest in death. For even when he was a dying, he laid us all under the most perfect arrest: none of us could take one step, either backward or forward, but as he gave permission; so that being spoiled of all our power, we could not help ourselves, much less the afflicted prince. This done, he cried out with a voice which shook the very foundations of both earth and hell, "It is finished;" and was then conveyed by Death into an invisible state.

This done, once more we thought the day our own; but here I cannot omit that fearful stagnation of nature which happened then, and the set of new preachers which were introduced. For when all under our influences had forsaken Immanuel, who was betrayed by one, denied by another, and forsaken by all his preachers; the indignant sun could not endure that sight, as if angry and ashamed at the proceedings of the sons of men, covered his face with a sable cloud, and denied one smiling ray to delinquent earth, whilst his Lord was ignominiously crucified. As if it had been seized with uncommon tremor, the earth itself fell into a fit of violent convulsions; the mountains reeled, the rocks rent, the graves opened, the dead arose, and all to preach the sufferings of the God of nature. An invisible hand rent the vail of the temple, that cloth of extraordinary texture, in twain from the top to the bottom; and a voice was heard to say, "The glory is departed from Israel, and now the most holy place is laid open."

Death having conveyed Immanuel to his lonely mansions,

the resolute though maimed Belzebub, our great prince, recovered himself as much as was possible, his head being incurably broken; mustered his main forces, and went to the assistance of Death, if possible, to keep Immanuel fast prisoner in the silent tomb. Nothing doubting but if this could be, we should render all that he had heretofore done and suffered, null and void. The better to succeed in this important enterprise, we sealed the door of the sepulchre, and set a watch of faithful soldiers, instructed by the chief of the Jewish priests; and still to make the security stronger, every fiend did his utmost to impose weights on the buried body of Immanuel, to prevent his resurrection from the solitary grave.

But to our eternal confusion, on the third day of his invisible state, he arose, shook himself from the dust, came to the door of the sepulchre, burst it open, and laid hold on Death, who stood as centinel next to the door of the tomb, trampled him under his feet, and by main force wrenched from him his poisonous sting, that sad repository of all his strength! This done, he said, "Henceforth, monster, hast thou no power over the people for whom I have died." Then he broke impetuously through all the lines of martial infernals, who stood in firm phalanx around the tomb; seized the lately wounded chief, who was very ill with a fever in his mind, arising from his disaster upon Mount Calvary. He took the fiend, the great Belzebub, chained him to the axle of his chariot, mounted his seat, and rode triumphantly through the gathering crowds of joyful saints, who on golden pinions descended from heaven, in solemn strains to hymn their all-conquering and triumphant Redeemer.

O my friends! my dear infernals! it must have pierced your hearts with the most poignant sorrow, to see him dragged in triumph through all the hosts of saints and angels, who fearless stood in blazing ranks to see the longed-for solemnity; and at the same time, to see our beloved friend Death lie gasping for life at the door of the sepulchre. Great was the confusion of the infernal brigades, when they saw their principalities spoiled, and Death and Satan so terribly handled: yea, so tremendous was their amazement, that, to escape the avenging hand of risen Immanuel, they retreated even to the nethermost depths of hell, and his scattered disciples again resorted to his erected standard. But

the greatest disappointment and consternation was when we understood that, after all our diligence and hazardous exploits, we, with our auxiliary priests, &c., had done nothing but what the hand and council of God had predetermined should be done; that by our seeming victory over Immanuel, he had for ever subdued us under his feet; and that all our hatred, envy, and cruelty, was fully recompensed into our own bosoms—now deeper damned than ever.

Av. Ah, father, these were troubles indeed, such as do not happen every day; but it is not for us to desist from tempting. When our designs miscarry, then should we not act the part of desperadoes, such as we are?

In. Ah, gentlemen, great was the cause of my dismay, for Immanuel gave such demonstration of his Messiahship, that all which was written in the prophets concerning him, was exactly fulfilled in his life and death; yea, so very striking was the evidence, that many cried, "Truly this is a just man," and others, "Truly this is the Son of God." Therefore I greatly feared that all the world would become believers in him, and consequently shake off my yoke. But I was much obliged to my good friends, the Jewish clergymen; for their reverences greatly befriended me, and warmly espoused my interest; exerted their utmost power to establish the throne of great Infidelis and to destroy the early seeds of Christianity sown by Immanuel, and now beginning to grow.

Immanuel having, in opposition to all the powers of darkness, finished the work for which he came down to the earth; he triumphantly ascended to his native heaven, to the primeval embraces of his eternal Father, and assumed all the ensigns of empyrean glory.

Soon after this, the high festival of pentecost drew on, and as I formerly attended at Jerusalem, in the midst of many thousands, who, according to the law, came up to worship upon that occasion, not only from Judea, but from nations very remote, I dreaded no harm at the hands of a few illiterate fishermen, having not been informed that any of the rulers, or of the scribes and pharisees, had believed in Jesus; and therefore was at no pains to prevent the multitude coming up to the solemnity as usual. But here was another shock my kingdom sustained; for Peter the fisherman, who so very lately, like a dastard, impiously denied his Lord with

profane oaths, now, filled with the Holy Ghost, stood up in the midst, and clearly proved that Jesus was the very Messiah; and upon this occasion played off the heavy artillery of Sinai on the consciences of my people, which was attended with success so fatal to me, that no less than three thousand were pierced through the heart at once, and fell on the field of action. Now it was that my evil apprehensions were again alarmed, plainly perceiving that the artillery of the word was levelled against my person, and that the first end of the Gospel was the subversion of my diabolical government. However, I drew up all the forces which I possibly could, in the hurry of that surprise, and had just time to give one general discharge, my soldiers crying out as they gave the volley, "These men are drunken with new wine." It was but a poor opposition to doctrine so powerful, I allow; but it was the best that could at that time be made, for we were obliged to retreat in much confusion, and leave the Christian fishermen masters of the field.

As soon as we were a little recovered from the disorder into which that unexpected misfortune had plunged us, I summoned a council of war, in which the self-righteous Jews were the principal, next to our infernal train. I myself gave special orders, that some method should be concerted effectually to destroy the name of Jesus: "For," said I, "if we let them alone, all the people will believe in their doctrine." In this council it was resolved to raise an army of those who were the greatest adversaries to the name of Jesus, to whom orders should be given to kill, destroy, and cause to perish all who believed in this way, till the Christian religion should be banished from the face of the earth. This army was raised, and the command given to Saul of Tarsus, at that time a mighty zealot for us, and who, for a season, made dreadful havoc of all that believed contrary to the faith of the priests; for it ought to be observed, that the opinion of the priests has been esteemed true orthodoxy, and the only faith, in all ages of countries.

But here another sad disappointment and loss befel me; for as this same captain Saul was on his march to Damascus, to fight a pitched battle with the Christians, it so fell out, that Immanuel himself was taking a tour in the valley, to see how the promegranates budded, and falling in with trusty Saul on his journey, unveiled his own personal ex-

cellencies to him, and laid him under an immediate arrest. As soon as he saw the beauties of Immanuel, he felt the most sincere esteem for his person, and conceived the most exalted sentiments of his friendship and love. Yea, he was even so much grieved that ever he had drawn his sword against him, that he renounced the service of Infidelis on the spot, took the oath of allegiance to Jesus, and thenceforward hated my person and government with the most perfect hatred; and did what he could to overturn our state and subvert our government.

Immanuel having the most tender regard for Saul, gave him a new name written upon a white stone, appointed him one of his prime ministers, and sent him on an embassy to my subjects to negotiate a revolt from me.

You cannot conceive the astonishment the Jewish clergy were in, when swift-winged Fame arrived and blowed it abroad in every street, that Saul, who was formerly so zealous for our interest, was now become a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes, and was likely to do us more mischief than all who had gone before him.

By this time several of the Jewish rabbins rebelled against me, and joined themselves to the Nazarenes, who now made it their whole business to go from place to place, exhorting my subjects to revolt, exposing my deformity and devilishness, to all they met with. O! those were trying times; for, notwithstanding we had forces out against them in every quarter of the world to impede their progress, the word of God by their means prevailed in such a manner, that it was beyond our power to suppress it: for if we burned one Nazarene, two more presently sprang up out of his ashes. Even Rome itself, then the metropolis of the world and seat of pagan virtue; Athens, where Minerva was said to have been trained up; were soon infested with this new doctrine, and very considerable numbers in them durst oppose our government, and dispute our title to empire;—even alleged that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and that all pagan virtue is but dross and dung in comparison of the Gospel of Christ Jesus.

However, to cut my story as short as may be; after many hundred thousands of the Nazarenes were slain, my subjects became weary of the war. By this time they saw clearly, that persecuting them to death only served to in-

crease their number and strength; so that if those restless devils, Malevolus and Crudelis, would have been quiet, they would gladly have dropped their weapons, and agreed to a cessation of hostilities with the Christians.

Im. Little judgment as I am allowed to have of historical affairs, I myself have seen what effect opposition usually hath upon that class of people; for if in any place where my standard is most eminently elevated, there happen to be any of that sect, you shall find them more fervent in their study of virtue and zealous in their opposition to me, than in those provinces where morality or civility preside. Ah, gentlemen, we have had trying times pass over us!

In. Trying times indeed. For notwithstanding the fervent zeal of Malevolus and Crudelis, the many sore campaigns they served so enervated their arms, that although their principles remained implacable, they were even obliged to sit down in despair of ever being able to extirpate the religion of Jesus from the world.

But my fertile brain soon produced fresh devices: seeing many of my temples forsaken, and my idols without mercy thrown to the pavement, I began to think of other expedients to impede the progress of Christianity. I laboured to introduce Ease, and her handmaid Prosperity, among the Christians, not without hope, that when they were full they would forget their God. The better to favour this deep contrivance, I persuaded the valiant Crudelis to scabbard his sword for a season, and leave the people of our hate to the possession of their tranquillity.

It was not long that this scheme had been put in practice, ere I began to reap the fruits of my wisdom, for Ease and Prosperity wrought more to my advantage than all the excursions of the devil Crudelis. When they were at ease from the lash of persecution, they were foolish enough to quarrel among themselves; grievously bit, and devoured one another; the cause of their strife for the most part being who should be the greatest.

Fa. A very important question, much canvassed, but never as yet resolved. Had I been a clergyman instead of a devil, I had certainly been a great casuist in this part of school theology. Never was a point of doctrine more belaboured certainly than this, and never were people more

divided in sentiments than about its resolution, even from the great church of Turkey, down to the smallest dissenting congregation. The divines of the established church in Turkey stand stiffly to it, that Mahomet and themselves ought to preside over all the believing world. The doctors of France, Spain, and Italy, are as firmly persuaded that pre-eminence is due to none but his holiness and themselves; and that all who are not of the same opinion, are certainly in a state of damnation.

As for their reverences in England, though they will deny no honour to his popeship which really is his due, they will submit to none as the leading priest but his grace of Canterbury; and consider that church which they are the pillars of, as the purest establishment that the lower world can boast of. Others indeed there are who greatly question his grace's right to preside, and therefore refuse to bow to his mitre, and will have a pope of their own choosing, resolving to be enslaved in their own way. Hence, although the reverend members of the associate synod cannot in conscience submit to the corrupt governors of the kirk of Scotland, all of whom they have long since recommended to the care of the devil, much less can they bow to a metropolitan, whom they call the image of the pope; they can very cordially submit to the government of the reverend Mr. Adam Gib, because they themselves had the pleasure of choosing him. That goes a great way. And hence it is, every society has its pope.—The venerable ——— of ——— at ——— submit for the same reason to the great ———; and the ——— of ——— to the Rev. ———; so that it is not submission itself that is objected to, so much as the mode of it: for gentlemen will be submissive enough, may they but choose a pope for themselves. But remember this, whoever is chosen the pope of a party, is by his partisans always deemed the greatest. For instance, at the Foundry none is so great as the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, sometime fellow of Lincoln college, Oxon. And at the ——— none ever preached or wrote like the great ——— D. D. author of ——— and of ——— and of ——— &c. &c. &c. But, amongst them all, a very few are found who consider Jesus Christ as the greatest, and who properly call him Master.

Av. I thought Immanuel had settled that point long

agone. Did not he establish this rule for the observance of his disciples, "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant?" Did not the divines abide by his determination?

Fa. No, Avaro; quite the reverse: for the schoolmen will have it, that he who is chief, shall be lord over his brethren; by these means they have annexed a certain degree of nobility to their religion, which Jesus never intended to be joined with his. But we hinder the reverend Infidelis proceeding with his story.

In. Those female fiends, the ladies Prosperity and Ease, as plenipotentiaries for Belzebub, made great proposals to them, and indeed they soon established kingdoms, principalities, and powers, of the Christian name.

Then were the Christians able to maintain themselves against their pagan neighbours, my professed subjects. This I patiently bore, believing that the martial spirit of the Christians, a little indulged for the present, would greatly make for our interest and the final establishment of my kingdom.

Those revered ladies, Prosperity and Ease, had not been long amongst them, ere many who bore the Christian name were desirous of coming to terms of agreement with me; but upon this express condition, "That in the treaty of amity betwixt them and me, it should be stipulated that they still be called by the name of Christ; for it was now become scandalous to bear the name of another." This request I thought reasonable enough, and that to grant it would be no very great concession on my part; therefore I readily agreed, and the treaty was confirmed. It is an invariable rule with me, that it is not very material whether a man is called a Christian or not, provided I have but safe possession of his heart; for names do not change the nature of things.

This amiable fiend, lady Prosperity, rested not in her pleasing operations, till she had quite reduced the Oriental nations to such a degree of reason, that they petitioned my personal return among them, as my loving subjects returned to their allegiance. Having now secured the Oriental, the splendid lady and me undertook the conquest of the Occidental church; and, the better to succeed in our enterprise,

we fixed our abode at Rome, famous both for ancient and modern paganism. As for me, I knew it was necessary that I should remain incognito, till a fair opportunity should offer for my emerging out of darkness: but my lady Prosperity decked herself in her richest attire, and openly resided among the Christians, who were so ravished with her excellent beauties, that he was deemed the most happy man who could prevail with her excellency to take up her lodging in his house. Her ladyship, you know, is not to be won by every one who addresses her; here she acted according to previous instructions, and made free with the bishop's house, as best suited to our purpose.

Wonderful were the works which she performed there; for at her first arrival the bishop was no more than a plain honest man, having but one congregation in his diocese; but first she created him, reverend; then, his lordship; then, his grace; and after that, his holiness, &c. Indeed, the vast dominion and immense revenues which she conferred on him, so swelled the haughty prelate, that, not contented with the honours he then possessed, he claimed dominion over all as the father of the whole world. Even this was short of giving content, unless he should also reign over heaven and hell; therefore he hath seized the gates of both, and lets in and out just whom he pleases. Nothing short of arrogating to himself the prerogatives of the Almighty could satisfy his ambition, such as his holiness, infallibility, supremacy, &c. The devil himself never aimed at higher things. In the mean while her ladyship, at her leisure hours, waited on those who were of any account among the Christians, who for the most part had nothing of Christianity but the name. Some, indeed, were firmly attached to Immanuel, who could not bribed, even by her largest offers; but their number was comparatively small. Seeing the progress which Prosperity made, they went about the streets complaining in some such words as these: "This harlot Prosperity will be the ruin of Christianity."

In process of time I was sent for to the bishop's court, he being entirely reconciled to me. The worthy prelate received me with all the reverence due to my person, and laid before me a beloved scheme which he had designed, and of which he desired my opinion.

Having maturely digested his plan, I replied, "Worthy

and self-adoring sir, has your holiness power sufficient to defend your deityship, providing your divinity should be called in question?" To which his holiness: "Yes, yes, yes, I have—I have.—There are several potent princes, who will conspire to make me omnipotent. They will spend their substance—depopulate their dominions—destroy their bodies, damn their own souls, and the souls of their subjects, in defence of my godhead.—There are many wise priests, also, who will contribute all their wisdom, for their own emolument, to make me omniscient or infallible." Having such an agreeable account of his holiness's affairs, I resolved all his scruples at once; for thus I addressed him: "Most subtile of all the priests, if thus you are supported, I think all things go very favourably. Therefore lose no time in publishing to the world your excellent scheme of divinity. Let it be proclaimed that henceforth you are no longer man."

Im. His holiness was in the right of it to disclaim humanity. What mortal man was ever endued with such qualities as are his? What mere man was ever infallible? Not Peter; he fell low enough. Infallibility is an essential attribute of Godhead; and his holiness being possessed of that, must needs be God. What man ever did, or ever will, reign with despotic power ever all the priests and princes of the earth, putting down one and exalting another at his pleasure, like his holiness? It is by him that kings reign, and princes decree judgment, and not by the Almighty, as formerly. Therefore his holiness can be no mortal man. And yet a mortal god is a strange sort of character.

In. The great priest thanked me for my good advice, secretly renounced the name of Jesus, and swore allegiance to me. Called for Falax, whom he chose for his scrivener; and Perfidiosus, whom he appointed secretary. Then, with all convenient speed, issued forth an edict, in which it was declared,

1. That the word of God is no longer of any force to decide religious controversies; but that the bare word of his holiness at Rome should determine in every case.

2. That no man henceforward should dare to search the Scriptures, contrary to the resolution of the apostolic chair; the Bible being condemned as a book full of heresy and protestant tenets; containing many things pernicious to

the souls of men, and very derogatory from the honour of holy mother church.

3. That the pope's bible or canons, decrees, and legends, are to be held as the only rule of faith and practice, exclusive of all others, under pain of eternal damnation.

4. That God, who made heaven and earth, hath no longer power to save or damn any man without the pope's permission; and that the infallible bishop of Rome would save and damn whom he should think proper.

5. Notice was given to all whom it might concern, that the free pardons were already all expended. So that a former proclamation made from another quarter, which held forth nothing but free pardons, is to be held null and void; and that in future no man may expect pardon, unless the full price is paid into the hands of a faithful priest, as delegate of his holiness.

6. That the Holy Ghost is to be deemed incapable of the work of sanctification; all the souls he hath undertaken to cleanse having been found with many spots upon them, before they passed through his holiness's furnace, hereafter to be named.

7. Advertisement; That his holiness the pope has, at great expense, obtained a very large quantity of the most purifying fire in hell, together with a battalion of the most skilful furies of the pit to work the flames, both of which he hath placed in limbo, alias purgatory; where, for a proportionable sum promptly paid unto one of his holiness's vassals or priests, any catholic spectre shall be burned as white as a bishop's band.

8. The better to encourage this branch of priestcraft, it was declared that no case is quite desperate, but that of those who abide by the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice.

9. It was declared, that the Almighty has no longer any power to support princes in their sovereignty, that power having devolved upon his popeship; who for the future would exalt or debase princes, as they proved steady or unsteady to his interest.

10. It was enacted, that no man should in the least call in question the pope's divinity, his supremacy, and infallibility; and every person thus offending should be deemed

an atheist, a heretic, and traitor, and as such should be destroyed.

Now, my brother, having thus far carried on my history, let me beg you to recite some part of yours.

FA. With all my heart, brother; but it must be to-morrow morning. Our time is now spent. Business must be attended, or it will wither and decay.

XI.—FASTOSUS, &c. &c.

FA. Pray, Crudelis, what is this mighty affair, that so highly tickles your fancy? Let your kindred share in your mirth, I beseech you.

CR. Yesterday afternoon I was conjured up by Squire Broadfield, to assist in the whipping of a poor man, who being ready to perish with hunger, unluckily begged a morsel of bread at his door. But before I give you an account of the whipping, I shall first give you a specimen of the gentleman's character.

Squire Broadfield is a gentleman, and justice of the peace. He is worth five thousand pounds a year, and that is enough to make him a gentleman, even if his father had been a beggar; to make him wise, though born a fool; learned, although a very dunce. Indeed it must be owned, the principal part of his worship's education was had under Dr. Ringwood and Dr. Jowler, the celebrated tutors of his kennel. Their maxims he perfectly understands, and their virtues he has adopted; but five thousand a year, you know, makes the study of the kennel truly classical.

Talk you of Orpheus to him, his worship proposes the virtue of Ringwood to your consideration. Do you admire the ardour which flames in the Iliad; his worship says, no music like the voice of Jowler. Tell him of the majesty of Virgil, he'll bid you mind well the gait of his horse, what a majestic creature he is. An emperor, says he, might be proud to ride such another. Do you recommend the pleasures of solid learning to him; he is in raptures about the diversions of the chase. As yet he hath avoided the yoke of matrimony; not that he was ever an admirer of continence, few gentlemen being more conversant with the fair sex than his worship.

He keeps in his house a wanton train of over-fed servants, the superfluities of whose table would comfort the bowels of many indigent; besides a pack of hounds, which devour more than serves to maintain all the poor in the parish workhouse. But this miserable wretch, who cannot work because he is lame, and having no parish to flee to for relief, chooseth to beg rather than steal, for which his worship ordered him to be severely whipt by my good son the beadle, till he shall be made willing either to steal for living, or to die of hunger.

Im. I am not certain that John Ketch, Esq. of fatal character, had any hand in procuring the law for whipping beggars; but certainly it adds greatly to his revenue. Nor am I certain that it was made on purpose to drive vagrants from begging to stealing, in order more speedily to ease the nation of such a burden; but certain I am, it greatly helps to fill up the Tyburn chronicle. But what more, cousin?

Cr. As the poor lame fellow was confronted by the beadle, and was convinced of the reality of his worship's benevolent intention to have him well flogged; he fell on his knees, and implored mercy for God's sake, and for Christ's sake, &c. promising that, if he might be forgiven this once, he would never return to these parts any more. He pleaded his indigence, his hungry belly, his lameness, his belonging to no parish, and every thing his fear could devise; but all served only to harden the justice's heart the more. He ordered the beadle to take him away, and do his duty immediately. The beadle signified to him as they drew near to the whipping-post, that he felt some relentings of heart towards him; and that if he could only give him a handsome fee, he would favour him as much as his reputation would admit of. But, upon inquiry, finding that the old fellow was so wicked as to have no money, his heart became like brass, and he resolved to ply him thoroughly to the satisfaction of his worship.

Accordingly, when Squire Broadfield and I arrived in company to see the sport, there was the poor rascal whose poverty was his principal crime, tied to the post and mangled with the cord, which the lusty beadle plied with nervous arm.

Oh! how his worship and I did laugh to see the villain,

whose poverty was obstinate, leaping, as his lameness would let him, and writhing his bloody back, as the whip was lustily played about him by the sturdy beadle; who, for his part, would rob and steal, and do any thing, rather than be whipped by a trusty brother of the trade; yea, would act ten thousand villanies rather than die of hunger. This fellow must be a most incorrigible rogue to be sure, if he is not willing by this time either to steal and be hanged, or patiently to die of an empty belly.

Im. What, Crudelis, have they made a law to whip all the beggars that infest your country?

Cr. No, no, Impiator, I heartily wish there were such a law, for then I would even quit my devilship to become king of the beadles. If all beggars were to be punished at the whipping-post (as I know no reason why they should not), perhaps his worship himself, and his reverence the parson of the parish, would not escape a thorough drubbing. And yet, Crudelis as my name is, I think the whip-beggar law is very partial and unjust, as it lays hold on none but poor petty beggars, who would be content with bread, shins of beef, and table beer; whilst others may with impunity beg, and obtain some thousands a year of the nation's money.

What are all the ranks of mankind, but so many beggars? Does not his reverence the inferior clergyman, beg a living from my lord bishop, or some neighbouring nobleman; and do not their lordships beg of the king? Do not the very members of parliament come hat in hand, and meanly beg of the corporation, having no consciousness of worth in themselves? Do not the pliant courtiers sue to the favourite for places of trust for the sake of the profit? Beggars all, except the stern patriot, a pelican which does not appear once in a century. But if their lordships, the noble beggars, and their honours, the gentlemen beggars, are to be considered as authors of the whipping-law, I should have wondered indeed, if care had not been taken to exempt themselves from its penalty.

The case stands exactly thus. If a gentleman, extravagant beyond his revenue, beg for a thousand or two per annum, he shall not only escape with impunity, but obtain his suit; provided always, he will be the humble pliant creature of the minister; but if a poor, helpless, low-

born wretch, pinched with hunger, happen to beg a piece of bread at an interdicted place, he shall be exercised at the whipping-post.

In. I think, sir, you agreed to give us some account of your affairs. We should hold ourselves much honoured by the favour. But for this, I would beg the history of my son Crudelis, who makes himself so merry at the expense of foolish vicious mortals.

Fa. His history might be entertaining enough, I suppose; but doubtless mine must be much more elegant and instructive, as my concerns have been mostly with venerable gentlemen, and with none more than those of the sacerdotal function.

Notwithstanding I prevailed with the Jews, almost unanimously, to contemn the person and testimony of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christian religion gained ground in the world. Yea, the word of God grew mightily, and prevailed over the traditions of both pagan and Jewish sages; therefore, from thenceforward I found it necessary to deal deep in the things of religion.

I began my trade with ecclesiastical titles, which were altogether unknown in the days of Christ and his apostles; a set of goods very venerable with the populace, and wholly of my manufacture. An assortment of trifles which greatly pleased the lords of religion, and forwarded the deep designs of priestcraft.

Im. With your leave, sir, I have heard that all the lord bishops are descended in a direct line from the apostles; must it not then follow, that the convocation at Jerusalem consisted of the most reverend fathers in God, their graces, my lord Peter, my lord Paul, &c. &c. metropolitans? and the right reverend fathers in God, my lord Stephen, my lord Philip, my lord Timothy, my lord Barnabas, &c. diocesans?

In. Son, you ought not to interrupt your honourable uncle. You may remember that these titles are all of later date.

Fa. My nephew shall hear, if he will but have a little patience. The famous lady Prosperity and you, brother, had not been a very great while at Rome, before I found sufficient encouragement to erect my office for vending sacerdotal titles there; and I must own that for many years I had a brisk run of trade, till in fact the church had room

for no more, from the great infallible priest at Rome, down to a Cumberland curate. The first production of this kind, was a very brilliant medal inscribed with these five capital letters, P, A, T, E, R, which having finished, I presented at a general convocation of bishops, who as yet were not become reverend. They were highly pleased with the device, having never seen such a thing before. The worthies examined it one after another, and all found that the venerable letters well put together, and properly interpreted, signified Father. And certainly the event has proved, that great is the magical power of this medal.

Every one said to his fellow, "What can be more agreeable to our function than this venerable title? Are not we the fathers of the people?" They forgot that One is the Father of the people, even God. I was therefore desired, with all speed, to procure a like medal for every member of this august assembly. Soon after this, I provided medals more highly finished, and inscribed, P, A, T, R, I, A, R, C, H, A, ; one of which I bestowed on the holy bishop of Rome; a second I gave to the bishop of Alexandria; a third to that of Constantinople; a fourth to that of Jerusalem; and a fifth to him who presided in the church of Antioch. In all which places my medals were more highly valued than the finest ruby; and he who could by any means obtain one of them, was supposed to be elevated far above the common rank of mortals.

Long and very successfully had I followed this medallion trade, when a famous and worthy prelate of Rome, who was a great admirer of my productions, came into my office. After doing obeisance to me, and turning over my pretty devices, he asked me, "If I thought, with all my ingenuity, I could produce a genuine medal with this inscription:

P, A, P, A, S, : S, U, P, R, E, M, U, S,

OR,

EPISCOPUS UNIVERSALIS."

I told him, that if all the artists in hell were to unite their wisdom in one mechanical head, it would be utterly impossible; for, said I, the whole creation does not furnish sufficient materials. But if it please your holiness, I can make you a sham medal of that sort, which may perhaps answer

all the ends you have in view, as well as if it were real. "Oh!" said he, "I care not for my part whether it is real or counterfeit, if I can only by your assistance, my worthy Fastosus, impose upon the credulity of mankind, and make the world believe that I am supreme pope and universal bishop; then I should reign with despotic power over the estates and consciences of all Christians. My good friend, please you to make me the medal, and I will cause the world to believe that I had it from the Almighty, with letters patent under the broad-seal of heaven, for the sole use of it, to me and my successors for ever. "I well know," returned I, "that your holiness means no more than in a pious manner to impose the cheat upon the world, the better to fill your coffers, and aggrandize your name; in which laudable undertaking your adored Fastosus shall be ever ready to direct and assist."

To work I went, having called in the assistance of several of our friends, and made a counterfeit medal, in the likeness of a treble crown, with certain inscriptions of the cabalistic kind upon it. They were short but pithy sentences, as you shall hear. On the one side of the first crown was inscribed. He that is honoured as the wearer of this medal, is possessed of infallible knowledge.—Opposite to that was carved, in fine Italian, He is supreme over all laws divine and human.—On the right side of the second crown were these words in large capitals: This is the head of the church,—On the left were these: This is the vicar of Christ, and successor of Peter.—On the third and uppermost crown were the following: The keys of heaven, hell, and purgatory, are in his possession, and used only at his pleasure. Round the edge was this writing: He reigneth supreme over all the kings of the earth; putteth down one, and exalteth another at his pleasure.

When finished, I presented it to the arch-prelate, who received it with all imaginable thankfulness, viewed it with the most exquisite delight, and, oftener than once, protested by his infallibility that he had never seen any thing contrived with equal art, nor so suitably adapted to his aspiring principles. Transported with joy, he cried out, "O thou ingenious spirit! bless thee for thy assistance! This precious medal will exalt my name above all that is called God; all the European princes will now become my vas-

sals, and the adorers of my priestly majesty. But to complete the work, I pray thee, good Fastosus, think of some suitable device for me, by which I may bind all the various ranks of the clergy to my interest; for I shall never dare to shew my miraculous medal, nor divulge the delightful inscriptions on it, unless I have something of the like nature to present to their reverences; for this alone will excite them to favour the cheat. As for laymen, the scum of nature, I regard not them. They are asses upon whom we shall ride with pleasure and profit; and if at any time they ride restive, we will tame them with the rod of discipline, and so belabour them with the cudgel of excommunication, that with gladness they shall submit implicitly to our decisions. Could not the great Fastosus strike me a variety of medals, of different worth and designs; and lodge them safely in my possession, that I may have the sole distribution of them amongst my depending clergy? for unless they cleave as close to me as the scales to the back of Leviathan, I shall never be able to support my pretensions to infallibility and supremacy."

To which I replied, "Great priest, in order to bind the clergy inviolably to your interest, let me advise you to take care that your decisions be always in their favour; place your own grandeur in the front of all your proceedings, and let theirs immediately follow it;" which advice the good man cordially embraced, and ever since has invariably followed it with the utmost precision.

"From henceforth," continued I, "I give you full power and authority to preside over all those medals which I have already issued forth; and for the future the disposal of them shall be at your holiness's pleasure. I will moreover add to the number, and you shall have more than sufficient to gain all the clergy to your party. But observe, you must receive this power at the hand of great Fastosus; for it is by me alone you can lord it over the estates and consciences of men." The great prelate heard with attention, and then rejoined, "Mighty Fastosus, if you will oblige me in this, you may depend upon me and all my successors as faithful subjects; implicitly obedient servants to your highness, and your father Belzebub. Nor do I doubt but the rest of the priests, for the sake of power, will be equally loyal to you, and implacable enemies to Immanuel; there-

fore your kindnesses shall be gratefully returned on our parts."

"Very well," said I; "but be sure that all your villainy be carried on under the show of sanctity, otherwise you will do us but little service."

Av. Then, sir, by what you say, it may be concluded the hoary prelate at Rome is very sensible that he is Belzebub's agent, and that all his pretensions beyond those of the lowest pastor are an imposition.

Fa. Yes, Avaro, he knows it very well, and that makes him the more like unto us; indeed the cheat is so palpable, that any one who has read his Bible with attention must needs see through it. But by these proceedings I soon found I had cut out a great deal of work for myself, so that I was obliged to be doubly diligent. However, my sole delight being to promote the works of darkness, I soon struck off seventy new medals, inscribed Cardinalis. These I presented to his holiness, who examined them with great attention, and was highly pleased with the ingenious device.

"Most noble spirit," said he to me, "these medals, I perceive, will raise the gentlemen who receive them next in dignity to myself, and they will be the first and most able to support the see of Rome." You must needs know, my friends, that this prediction has been fully accomplished. For in all ages since the cardinals received their medals, they have been truly indefatigable in establishing the power and supremacy of the pope. His holiness and they being so intimately connected, that they must stand or fall together.

In the next place, I struck off a considerable number somewhat inferior to the former, distinguished by a mitre on one side, and on the other by the inscription Archiepiscopus; which in like manner I presented to the father of the world, much to his satisfaction. "These," said he, "shall fix the class next to the former; and I doubt not but every one of them will be sufficiently obsequious, in expectation of a cardinal's hat." The archbishops being thus disposed of, I took all the diocesan medals which I had formerly produced, and put them under the care and disposal of the great prelate; and he was pleased to assign them to those who were next in place to the archbishops, each one in humble expectation of higher preferment.

Av. Ah, uncle! was it you that made those titles ascribed to the various orders of the clergy.

Fa. Was it I, do you ask? Yes, it was I indeed! Who ever read in the New Testament any thing at all about a supreme bishop, or about cardinals, and lord bishops? I made them all, I assure you, cousin; though I will not affirm, that every person who has borne these names has been absolutely under the dominion of pride.

To my great honour I speak it, Avaro, I ceased not when I had made their lordships the diocesans, but went on with my trade, till I had procured curious medals for a very great number of abbots, swarms of monks and friars, jesuits, Franciscan and Dominican friars, with a long train of etceteras, who soon appeared in shoals, as numerous as locusts when they ascend out of the bottomless pit. Then followed the bare-headed capuchins, mendicants, penitent pilgrims, &c., without number. Those religious gentry owe all their dignity to me, unless it may be that Avaro has some little hand in the matter.

Av. You do me great honour, sir, in mentioning me as a worker together with you.

Fa. After all this, the subtile priest thought that the antichristian hierarchy of Rome could not stand upon a foundation solid enough, unless all, or at least some, of the princes of Europe were invested with ecclesiastical titles, and so adopted into the new-modelled church. Therefore I told his holiness, that I had three highly-finished medals by me, ready prepared, fitting for royal personages. "Here," said I, "is one inscribed Rex Catholicus; let it be presented to your servant his majesty of Spain. The second medal, inscribed Rex Christianissimus, will be an acceptable present to your vassal the French king; and this third, inscribed Rex Fidelissimus, I advise you to bestow upon the little monarch of Portugal." His hoary holiness with raptures replied, "Very good, most noble Fastosus; this device will doubtless secure all these three princes, as so many pillars to support my infallibility. But what of the king of England, sir? I dread those islanders. Is there no medallion charm, by which that invincible prince can be secured to our interest? I pray you, good Fastosus, lend me a hand in this."

"I shall endeavour to serve your holiness," replied I; "and

then he withdrew. Soon after I presented him with a medal suited to his wish. It bore this inscription: Defensor Fidei, and was given to the monarch of England; but alas! it has not answered our expectations, for this same monarch, instead of defending the orthodox faith of Rome, was the first crowned head that protested against the supremacy of the Italian bishop.

Av. It is somewhat droll that the king of England, having shaken off the yoke of Rome, should still keep possession of the medal, which his predecessors received as a present from the pope. One would think that when the pope himself was renounced, in strict justice all his gifts should have been restored, and the title, Defender of the Faith, have been by a protestant priest rejected amongst the rest of Romish trumpery; but wonders never cease. Did you finish here, sir?

Fa. No, Avaro; I assure you many titles besides these were first issued from my office; such as His Grace, a title claimed by many a graceless duke, as well as antichristian priest. His Lordship, a title by which many a profane nobleman and irreligious bishop are distinguished. His Honour, claimed by many persons who never felt one desire after true honour. When a gentleman's honour depends merely upon his estate, table, and equipage, such a title as His Honour very ill becomes him; yet many such there are who claim the appellation.

Av. If high birth and an ample fortune do not entitle a man to His Honour, I pray you, what will?

Fa. An honourable conduct, Avaro, without which he is only a clown in disguise. And many such fools you may find wrapt in scarlet and lace, with swords dangling by their sides.

Im. I beg leave to observe, that according to modern maxims in my country, he is esteemed a man of honour, who can imitate the popish priests in scorning wedlock, frequenting the company of lewd women; he who is a stranger to every delicate and chaste sentiment; who scorns religion, disregards morality, and thinks it beneath his dignity to keep any of the commands of God; or even for a moment to reflect that there is a hereafter. It would be difficult to persuade some people, that the British senate is

too much composed of such men of honour as these. I should be glad, sir, to hear your opinion of a man of honour more at large, for I know that you are wise.

Fa. A gentleman of true honour fails not to improve his estate, be it great or small, to the best advantage; for he is neither indolent nor extravagant. His increasing revenues are not heaped up for adoration, nor laid by as useless lumber, but applied to clothe the naked back, and refresh the empty belly. His principal care is not how he may aggrandize his family, but how he may best serve his king and country; for he lives not to himself, but to the public good. He adheres to strict truth, is an utter stranger to impertinent raillery, and perfectly detests the voice of slander. In his civil affairs he does the same things to superiors, inferiors, and equals, which he would wish others in like circumstances to do for himself. If at any time he is so unhappy as to give his neighbour just cause of offence, he is free and open in confessing his error, and ready to retrieve it to the utmost of his power. The title of His Honour is well becoming such a man as this, whether his estate is great or small, his birth illustrious or obscure. But mercenary statesmen, plunderers of the public, ill deserve the titles with which they are distinguished. Happy might it be for Britain, if she could always procure officers for every department in government, who would prefer the welfare of the nation to their own personal and domestic emolument. And this every man of true honour will be sure perpetually to do.

Av. Then, uncle, I am inclined to think, that men of honour are not quite so plenty as some people have imagined.

Fa. I am sorry to say it, Avaro: but bad as the world is, there are still many to be found, who with propriety may be called men of honour: but it is well for us, they are mostly of obscure character. They cannot act the cringing knave, and vilely flatter their superiors, in order to gain preferment. Their countenances, adorned with comely modesty, cannot contend with the impudence of fools and rogues, therefore continue obscure, even when the most worthless are exalted. But if a truly honourable man should by some miracle ascend to an eminent station, and

be entrusted with public concerns, his country is sure to find a nursing-father, and not an accursed step-dame in him, as is often the case with other governors.

There is, likewise, his reverence the parson, a title ascribed to many men who lead very irreverend lives.

Av. True, sir; but it is the vulgar opinion, that the reverence of the parson does not depend upon his moral conduct, but upon his investiture received from the hand of the bishop.

Fa. I know it, Avaro; but it is a prevailing mistake. Imposition of the hands, even of an apostle, could never make any man reverend, whose doctrine is heterodox, or whose conversation is immoral; otherwise our friend Simon of Samaria might have been numbered among their reverences. Indeed, Avaro, were any man hardy enough to attempt it, I know of no subject more proper for satire than the pretended reverence of the parsons. But he must be daring indeed, who would set himself to oppose the orthodox priests of the day, for that would be thought by many the very same as to oppose God Almighty himself, and every body would cry atheist at him.

Av. Pray, sir, what is your opinion of reverence, and to whom may the epithet reverend consistently be given?

Fa. To very few of the leaders of any denomination, Avaro; and yet perhaps to some few of every denomination among protestants. I hate them, cousin, and could not bear to talk of them, were it not to oblige you; for they are avowed enemies to our administration, as you will see by the description of them. For he is a reverend minister, whether he was educated at Oxford or Aberdeen, who makes not gold, but the glory of Immanuel and the welfare of immortal souls, the first ends of his labours. Who is assiduous in his study, fervent in his ministry, and has a paternal affection for his people. Who studies not how to please the great, or to gain the esteem of the staring multitude, but to approve himself to God and the consciences of men, not shunning to declare the whole council of God, without any mixture of the inventions or traditions of men.

You may follow this man from the church to the market, from the pulpit into his family, and find him all of a piece; his whole conduct is one chain of uniformity. But it is not

every gownsman, either papal or protestant, nor even every dissenting minister, whom this description suits. Some there are (and who can deny it?), who are haughty and overbearing in their spirits; indolent in study; cool and lifeless in their ministry; thoughtless and unconcerned about the real welfare of their people. Yea, some are so wretchedly lazy, or so much taken up with idle and vain amusements, that it is with difficulty they can bring forth once a week an oration fifteen or twenty minutes long; and that scanty production, perhaps, when it is exhibited, proves no more than a lecture on moral philosophy; or it may be a libel against some different party or denomination of Christians. You may follow some of them from the church to their families, and be fully convinced that they are divines only in name; they neglect in their families the very duties which they recommend to others; and what is still more, connive at the same vices in their families, which they expose and condemn in the pulpit. But after all, they have the cure of souls, and are the venerable and reverend clergy, in the same manner as the pope is the head of the church; I mean by craft and usurpation.

Av. I have got a noble company of these same parsons in my corporation of Avarice, whose business it is to vend wind in order to obtain wealth; a company confined to no one denomination, but made up of all. Every one of this company has got his own system of priestcraft; but all are intent upon the main point, viz. to get as much wealth by his craft as possible. Indeed the mother church of Rome very far outstrips the rest; for she may lawfully boast that her clergy to a man, are the steadfast worshippers of the God Avaro, their great benefactor.

However the protestants, both Calvinists and Lutherans, all who are freemen in the company of avarice, keep as near as possible to the orthodox priests of Rome, in making a lucrative trade of what they call the Gospel. And however they differ about what is, and what is not Gospel, they see eye to eye in regard to making profit of it, and turning the altar of the Lord to their own emolument.

In. How should it be otherwise, my son, seeing there are in some places manufactories on purpose for making parsons?

Fa. So I have heard, brother; with this addition, that

the making of parsons is reckoned both a lucrative and honourable employment, not unworthy of my own patronage. But, between you and me, the parson-makers are grievously disappointed frequently, however little they are sensible of it; for when they put their materials into the refining furnace, they hope to see at the end of the process a bright and shining minister of Jesus Christ come forth: but lo! a learned calf is produced, and a fervent adorer of the god Avaro.

In. It cannot be otherwise; for to our grief I speak it, the unalterable Immanuel hath reserved to himself the wisdom, power, and prerogative to make ministers of the Gospel; and if men, like Jannes and Jambres, will take upon them to imitate the inimitable works of the Almighty, they may be permitted to make things which may for a time be mistaken for Gospel ministers, even as those magicians performed miracles by divine permission.

Im. So then, gentlemen, I perceive your opinion is, that learning the languages and sciences unfits a man for being a Gospel minister.

Fa. No, Impiator, no such thing, or the gift of tongues had not been given at the feast of Pentecost. But it may be averred, that if a man has no more learning than the most learned university can give him, he cannot possibly be a minister of Jesus Christ. It is resting in these things as the only qualifications we think proper to laugh at, Impiator.

Av. Among those mercenary orators, there are whom we may call the jumblers. They are such who study not their sermons from the Scripture, but compile them from the writings of other men: being destitute of judgment to direct them in their compilations, they are obliged to rely implicitly on the sentiments of their authors. So it comes to pass, that they contradict on one sabbath what they asserted and half-proved the day before, merely because they happened to stumble on authors of different sentiments. But alas! poor men, what shall they do? It is their trade; they know not how to get a living without it; they cannot dig, and to beg they are ashamed; therefore are under the necessity of jumbling forward in the best manner they can. Of late years indeed, this jumbling tribe have hit on a more happy method of management, by which they save both their reputation and laborious study. Amongst learned

men there have always been some few of genius and industry, who have found means to turn the dulness and indolence of their brethren to their own emolument. They compose sermons, print and sell them to the others, who pay first a good price for them, then preach them; that is to say, read them to their several congregations. Enfield's, and Webb's, and Trusler's sermons, have been of great use to many a dull and lazy clergyman.

Fa. How is this, Avaro; you speak of the parsons as if they were at best but learned fools. How is it possible they should be so highly revered by the people, if they were such?

Av. I speak but of some of them, uncle; and to make good what I say, I can tell you that it is not the man, whom the ignorant populace revere, so much as the gown, cassock, and band; and these they would revere if they were seen upon an ass, provided always his ears were hid with a bush of well-powdered hair. I assure you, gentlemen, amongst the intelligent laity it is deemed a maxim, that any blockhead will do very well for a parson, if he has but friends to recommend him to a living; as a proof of this, I shall tell you a short story. There is one Mr. Provident, a merchant in London, who hath four sons at the grammar-school, under the direction of a learned gentleman of excellent sense. It was lately Mr. Provident made a visit to his sons and their tutor, when he took occasion to ask Mr. Teachum's advice in regard to his disposal of them.

To which the schoolmaster replied, "Sir, I have often with pleasure observed a penetrating judgment, solid understanding, and an inviolable attachment to truth, ennobled with the generous principles of true benevolence, in your eldest son. These qualities, sir, are excellently adapted to the mercantile life; I would therefore advise you to train him up in your own business. Your second son, Master Thomas, hath genius sufficient for any business; but I hope, sir, you will excuse me, if I tell you that I have discerned one thing in him, which in my judgment, unfits him for the capacity of a merchant. As I know, sir, you would have me to speak freely, you will not be offended with me, if I tell you, that it is a selfishness and contractedness of spirit, together with a violent propensity to lying and equivocation. If he were my son, sir, I would bring

him up to the law, in which he will very likely make a conspicuous figure. Your youngest son, Master James, has, if I mistake not, along with a very considerable degree of dulness, a heart that is a stranger to sympathetic feelings; but possesseth genius sufficient for a physician. I would point out the royal college for his residence."

Here Mr. Provident the merchant interrupted him, and said, "Sir, you have given your opinion of the two eldest and the youngest, but you say nothing of Harry, my third son; I pray, what do you say of him?" To which the teacher with a blush replied, "If it is agreeable, sir, I would advise you to make him a clergyman." To this the father, with a mixture of grief and anger, replied, "What, sir, do you think he hath genius sufficient for nothing else?" "I am afraid not," said the master; "but you can easily make friends with my lord bishop, and procure him a considerable benefice. Take this step, sir, and his lack of genius will scarcely be known, as he may preach and administer the offices of the church by proxy, which you know is very gentleman-like."

In. And do you really think, Avaro, that it is want of abilities to preach, that causeth so many vicars to keep journeymen to do their work for them?

Av. With some, sir, want of abilities is the principal cause; and with the rest, an utter aversion to the work, though, by the way, they once professed to be drawn to it by no less an influence than that of the Holy Ghost: but that was when a benefice was the object of their pursuit, and therefore not to be regarded after their end is obtained.

Fa. Cousin Avaro, here I believe we must stop, as we have certainly overstaid our time. I hold it good therefore that we depart, and meet here at the usual time to-morrow. Business, you know, must not be neglected. Adieu, my kinsmen.

DIALOGUE XII.

Fa. Well, gentlemen, I hope no idleness has attended any of our fraternity since last meeting. I went directly from you to assist a London jeweller in forming a set of ear-rings and pendants upon a new construction. I made him sensible of the most elegant plan, and enjoined him to pursue it, give the praise to his patron Fastosus, and so I left him.

Im. I pray you, sir, what is the real use of ear-rings? for my part, I have never been able to apprehend it, unless it is to save a small matter of gold against a day of penury.

Fa. They are of no use at all to the wearer, Impiator, though they help the goldsmith and lapidary not a little; but they are of excellent use to our government. You know the boring of the ear always was, and now is, an emblem of servitude. Yea, it is an incontrovertible point, that the act of boring, and suffering the ear to be bored, is a token of subjection to the infernal monarch.

Im. Ah, sir, how evidently the spleen would rage among the ladies, were they to know what you say of them!

Fa. And let it rage, cousin; what is that to me? The ladies are too much in love with courtly Fastosus, to banish me from among them even in their spleenish fits. But to explain the doctrine of ear-rings, be it observed, that the crafty Belzebub hath an invisible chain fixed to the ear-ring, by which he leads the wearers a wild-goose chase through all the vanities of the times. No sooner does the sable governor tug a lady by the ear, than she feels an impulse upon her heart, which directs her to the playhouse, opera, Vauxhall, Sadler's Wells, or elsewhere; but very seldom to the church. If at any time, for the sake of company, she takes her pleasure at church, the great deceiver keeps such a jingling of the chain in her ear, that she cannot attend to one word of the service; by these means, the park, the mall, the playhouse, aad the church, are in effect the same thing to many ladies of fashion.

Av. And are all who wear rings in their ears to be looked upon as slaves to the great Belzebub, uncle?

Fa. No, Avaro, not all, for the invincible Immanuel hath broken the chains and loosened the bands of servitude from many; nevertheless, they still wear the rings in their ears to testify what they have been. And what news from your friends, Avaro?

Av. Very little, sir; only that diligence, frugality, and good husbandry, go on as usual. All heads plodding, and all hands active to get and to save; for getting and saving is all the cry with them. I had a little matter to attend to last night, at the Swan tavern, where there was a very respectable meeting of manufacturers, by whom some few things tending to promote emolument were considered.

The first consultation was, "How they might conveniently lessen the quality of their goods, that their profits might be somewhat advanced." In order to this, a plan was proposed by Mr. Dolus, a very great tradesman, which was unanimously agreed to by the rest. The second thing was to settle the prices, and come into mutual engagements that no one should undersell his brethren, which after some slight altercation was as unanimously settled. You must know, mankind are not satisfied with being oppressed by infernal tyranny; but, to add to the devil's work, are got into the happy way of joining in combinations to oppress and devour one another. Nor is this practice peculiar to any one set of men, but is common with dealers of every kind and denomination, from the opulent farmers to the dealers in coals and candles.

When this was done, a question was put, How they should finish a certain quantity of goods against a certain day then proposed? For it seems they have large orders at present. To which one of them said, he thought it necessary to advance the journeymen's wages in order to encourage their diligence. But this gentleman's motion was unanimously rejected, as an unprofitable way of proceeding, very ill-suited to the growing demands of their several families. It was then proposed, that a small premium should be given to every workman who should finish a certain quantity of goods in a limited time, then and there to be stipulated. But this also was objected to, it being alleged, that some method might be found, that would produce the desired end, and yet save all those unnecessary premiums; which if given, would introduce a very bad custom.

At last an old gentleman, whose hoary locks shone as silver from under his weather-beaten wig, arose and most judiciously addressed his brethren in the following manner: "Gentlemen, you all know that such is the indolent disposition of journeymen, that in general, let their wages be ever so good, they have no notion of obtaining more than will procure them a bare maintenance through the week, and a few quarts of strong beer on Saturday night and Sunday. Therefore, to advance their wages is the certain way to have them work less than they do at present. But let us lessen their wages in proportion to our extraordinary call for goods: for by how much the more we drop the prices

of workmanship, by so much the more work shall we have done. A bare living they must have, let the prices be ever so low: and but a bare living they will have, if they are ever so high. If we advance the price, they work less; and if we drop it, they will—they must, work more. I say then, let us drop the prices."

The old gentleman's advice was cordially embraced by them all, and every one blessed the sagacity of the old fox, now grown gray in wisdom. And this day, or to-morrow, the journeymen's wages are to be lessened accordingly.

Fa. In the close of our last interview I was going to observe, that my prevalency is great amongst the nobility and gentry. By my indefatigable industry the greater part of them are rendered altogether insensible of their origin, so that they look down on their inferiors as a set of despicable creatures, of a species very different from themselves; not considering that my lord Superbo and poor Lazar Askalms are by nature brethren, formed of the same materials, and conceived in the womb of the same earth.

Av. Yet, sir, if my observations are just, I think they have some kind of an imperfect notion that they were originally formed of the earth: but as one part of the substance of the earth is esteemed much more precious and valuable than another, perhaps the people of fashion have the happiness of being formed of the more rich and esteemed particles, and the rest of mankind the infelicity of deriving their beings from vulgar clay. This is the more likely, as there is a manifest difference between their constitutions and those of people in the lower spheres of life; the first being brittle and feeble, the latter more robust and healthy.

Fa. That is false philosophy, Avaro; the brittleness you speak of does not proceed from any defect in the natural constitution of their frame, nor from any rottenness in the materials of which they are made, but hath its cause from themselves. Many of them in their infancy are nearly starved, from an infamous notion that enough of wholesome food is injurious to them:* and you will commonly find

* Some learned physicians, those celebrated defrauders of the grave, have found out that bread itself, which has been esteemed the staff of life in all ages, is at last become dangerous to the constitution, and therefore to be used with caution by all sorts of people, especially such as are best able to fee the doctor in case of personal indisposition. As for the poor, it is less matter what they eat, as the faculty can reap but little advantage from their sickness.

that food which yields the most healthful aliment, is withheld from them at the instance of Dr. Scrawl, the family physician. This same gentleman has not so little sense under his great wig as not to know, that his own personal emolument is intimately connected with the weak constitutions of people of quality, especially the ladies. By his many years' study of physic he has proved to a demonstration, that if the young gentry were suffered to eat enough of wholesome food like the farmer's children, his business would not be worth following.

Av. I know it well—for there is one of my disciples, a certain physician eminent in practice, who hath acquired a genteel fortune by prescription, and who, if he is indisposed himself, will not suffer an apothecary's drug to pass his gullet; a plain indication that he knows it to be hurtful. I have often thought, a good constitution put into the hand of the doctor, is like a good cause put into the hands of the lawyers—it gets worse with deceitful handling. When a man is by the force of medicine fairly got down, the skilful physician knows very well how to hold him betwixt life and death as long as possible; till at last he dies by inches of that prevailing distemper which kills so many people of fashion.

Fa. True, Avaro; but farther to prove the gentry the causers of their own infirmity, I would observe that what, in infancy, penury and want leave of the constitution unconsumed, luxury and idleness well nigh finish in youth; so that when the lady comes to embrace a husband, the one half of her remaining days are spent under the hand of the doctor, and the other half in pleasure and dissipation. As for the young gentlemen, before the boyish down on their faces is able to resist the razor, they have commonly contracted such loathsome disorders, as render them more fit for an infirmary than for the marriage bed, and have more need of a surgeon than a wife. Thus, Avaro, you may see by what means the constitutions of the gentry are so frequently enfeebled.

That they are formed of the same materials with their inferiors will appear, when you consider that there were none either noble or ignoble in the original state of mankind; all were on a common level; but when we had made a conquest of them, it became necessary for the Almighty to dis-

solve the original equality, that the world might be rendered in some measure tolerable to all, amidst the confusion and disorder which our dominion over them had introduced. For if people cry out that the world is bad now, it is certain it would be infinitely worse were superiority and inferiority utterly abolished. Moreover the Almighty, to manifest the equity of his procedure, has so ordered it, that the system of superiority and inferiority is perpetually upon the change. You may find some persons now, asking alms from place to place, who are descended from princes and nobles; and others in the most exalted station, who had their descent from very beggars.

In. Ay, brother, that very consideration, to urge no more, if duly attended to, would prevent the contempt which people of elevated rank are apt to let fall on their inferiors. But let them go on till the grand leveller Death approach. He spares neither rich nor poor, noble or ignoble. Samael knows no distinctions, cannot be bribed like temporal judges, admits of no excuses, and is an utter stranger to pity. At prince, at peasant, at the noble earl and his servile groom, at the dame of honour and the scorched cookmaid, he aims alike his unerring shaft, and brings all again to the dust from whence they were taken, to rot in their original equality.

Fa. There is another race which we distinguish by the name of mongrels, with whom I am deeply concerned. This generation of half-bred gentry includes tradesmen, the gentlemen of the law and of the faculty, together with the farmers. These gentry consider themselves as pretty near, if not altogether, on a level with the country squire, and therefore affect the manners of their superiors as much as possible. They are gentlemen, their wives are ladies and madams, and their children masters and misses. Hundreds of such gentlemen and ladies have I known, who could not justly boast that any of their ancestors, back to the tenth generation, were proprietors of so much as a single cottage with a cabbage garden. Yet they imperiously assume a title of address, equal to that of the queen's majesty; and no labourer or mechanic must dare to approach them, without a 'sir' or 'madam' in his mouth.

In. I have sometimes thought those ladies you speak of, are either ashamed of their given names, or hold them too

sacred for the profane mouths of servants and vulgar creatures; and indeed he would be deemed the most unmannerly wretch that ever trod upon English ground, who should say that Sarah Algood is his mistress; for Sarah must give place to madam, and she is now madam Algood, the shopkeeper's lady; and it would be more than her place is worth for a servant to name her mistress in terms less respectable.

Av. Excuse me, gentlemen, you know I love to be concerting schemes of profit, and here is one ready projected, which, if faithfully executed, would either fill the exchequer, or make a distinction betwixt persons of real quality and their apes in middle life.

Fa. What is your scheme, cousin? let us hear it, if feasible.

Av. I would advise the nobility, gentry, &c. never to go to a horse-course, cock-pit, or playhouse; not to go to Bath, nor a bawdy-house: that is to say, never to rest till they have procured a bill, in which it shall be enacted, that every man shall pay the sum of ten pounds sterling per annum, who suffers his wife to assume the name of madam. I would likewise have a tax of half the value laid upon every young master and miss, the farmers', apothecaries', attornies', and tradesmen's children, unless the husband or father can make it appear that his annual rent, clear of all incumbrance, is not less than four hundred pounds: if so much, or upwards, he should stand exempted from any such penalty, and enjoy the free use of such names of quality in his family.

In. Although it is quite foreign to my purpose, to dictate any thing to mankind which may be of service to them, I am free among ourselves to say, that my son's scheme is well concerted, and might answer valuable purposes were it carried into execution. The numerous bankruptcies, which make trade so precarious in England, have their spring in this fatal imitation of people of quality, so prevalent among tradesmen. Could this so very pernicious practice by any means be suppressed, the industrious merchant and manufacturer would meet with fewer losses by their retailing customers.

To your scheme, however, I would add another tax equally necessary, and that is upon every playhouse, as-

sembly-room, and place of pleasurable resort. One-fifth at least, of every ticket to Almack's, Ranelagh, every play-house, Cornely's, Sadler's-wells, the Pantheon, and every rout whatever, ought to be sacred to government. Till this, or some such thing is done, it will be difficult for the sensible English to believe that their governors aim at any thing beyond their own emolument. As for the tax upon 'madam,' it appears indispensably necessary, and can admit of no delay; however, we interrupt you, Fastosus.

Fa. I have a great deal of pleasure in stirring up people to quarrel with their Maker, and to say unto him, "Why hast thou made me thus? I love not the station thou hast placed me in; I have got parts to qualify me for a better than this in which thou hast placed me, therefore I am not dealt with according to my merit." The poor labourer, who, by the way, is the most happy and contented of his species, is not altogether pleased, because he was not born a gentleman and heir to a good estate. The squire and his lady are almost mad with anger, because they were not descended of noble ancestors; the nobleman himself takes it very unkind that he was not born to govern a kingdom. He that is born heir to a crown hath two things at which he is much offended: first, because the Almighty is so long in taking the father to himself, to facilitate his own accession to the throne: secondly, he is not well pleased because it is a regal, and not an imperial crown to which he is born heir. As for the man who is born to imperial dignity, he is angry because he is not appointed lord of the whole world. And one you know, who, having obtained the sway of the whole world, was angry with God, because he had not made two worlds for him to govern; even so angry, that he is said to have cried again. Thus, in all ranks and degrees of life, I make people quarrel with their Maker.

In. I have often heard it remarked by our infernal sages, that if the ambitious mind were to obtain what it is now in pursuit of, true contentment would be as far distant as ever; and an Alexander who covets a second world to ravage, could he get that, would want a third, after that a fourth, and so on till he had plundered the many millions of worlds which God hath made. Even then, were such a thing possible, his ambition would be as insatiable as ever, and his last effort would be the same as that of father Bel-

zebub's: I mean, he would attempt to plunder the eternal throne itself. Thus they allege, that the lowest degree of ambition and discontent in man, if the Almighty were continually to gratify it, would ascend to the most daring attempt of which the infernal monarch himself is capable. After all, I observed that the greater part of people are so far from deeming ambition to be criminal, they think a spice of it is indispensably necessary to a man of honour.

Fa. I know it, brother; but that is a striking proof of the blindness to which we have reduced them. Ambition, discontent, &c. reigning in any person, are infallible symptoms of a heart totally depraved and altogether under my influence. But let them go on to cherish an ambitious spirit, they will find their mistake at last. That judicious pagan, Epictetus, seems very capable of instructing many who are called Christians, and who have the advantage of the Bible. Yes, Infidelis! you and I both know, that ambition is the very vice which ruined our black fraternity; but for it they had been in heaven to this day.

As some quarrel with their Maker on account of their situation in life, I am equally successful in stirring up others to take offence at the manner in which the Almighty hath formed their bodies; as to their souls they do not regard them, indeed seldom consider that they have an immortal spirit belonging to them. If by chance such a thought as that they have an immortal soul, should pass through their minds, it gives them no concern in what position it is found, because they take it for granted that nobody sees it. So very inconsiderate and stupid are many, that one who understands the language of hearts, provided he could delight in the voice of discontent and murmuring, might meet with high entertainment amongst our people. For,

One young lady says, O! if the Almighty had made me an inch and a half higher, then my person would have been abundantly more proper. Her neighbour is as ill at ease, because she thinks the Creator has bestowed superfluous labour upon her, in giving her a couple of inches of redundant height, which she looks upon as a very considerable deformity. Another says, Why did he make me with round shoulders? might he not as easily have made them square? I am ashamed to go into company, because I have not a

handsome carriage of the head and neck. What the back-board and girdle can do, has been tried to press in the prominent *os humeri;* but sad experience teaches, that she may as soon wash the Ethiopian white, as make that even which the Almighty hath made crooked. Nor less afflicted is her kinswoman on account of the yellowness of her skin.

Av. I have heard several people of allowed knowledge modestly wish, that all court ladies laboured under the same misfortune the last unhappy gentlewoman does; being persuaded that if it were so, naked breasts would never more be brought into fashion, to the annoyance of the gentlemen, and the scandal of the ladies; for you know fashions are all born at court.

Fa. Not at the court of London, Avaro, but Versailles; therefore it would indicate better sense in your knowing people, to wish the French ladies the above misfortune. It is held an act of high-treason against the French, for the English court to receive any fashion which hath not had a certificate from Versailles. This policy seems indeed very mysterious, when we consider that the British heroes can so effectually drub the monsieurs, as to make them cry *peccavi,* and at the same time the French ladies should have the English in such absolute subjection.

It is impossible for any person to conceive the trouble I have in preparing those ladies for the ball or assembly, or pantheon, and what art I am obliged to employ, in hiding their supposed defects and redundancies. The lady who fancies her stature to be somewhat too low, obliges me to add to it the whole length of a super tall pair of wooden heels, and is extremely careful to set off her little body to all advantage possible, so that every beholder must be struck with the most perfect gentility of her appearance. On the other hand, her neighbour, who is over tall, is as careful on her part to have the flattest heels that can be wore, and is equally industrious in decking to the best advantage the whole of her extravagant height.

Nor hath their neighbour, who is affected with a dun and yellow skin, less trouble and anxiety of mind, besides her great toil of body. The waste she makes of wash-balls, and the best recommended cosmetics, together with her own and her servant's labour, in endeavouring to rub off the native tint, is not to be conceived. But, alas! it is labour

in vain. All the comfort which remains for her, is derived from a black necklace assisted by two or three well-disposed patches, which she hopes may in some measure overcloud the hated yellowness of the adjacent parts.

So absolutely foolish are they, that I have some subjects who say, "Ah me, why were my ancles made so strong and fleshy? O that they had been slender and genteel, then I should not have been thus dependent on the mantua-maker for a covering for them!" However, gentlemen, were it not a rule established among the fair sex, that ancles somewhat gross are altogether ungenteel, it would puzzle a philosopher to determine, how it is that small feet and slender ancles come to have more virtue and real worth in them, than those that are otherwise. But certainly it is deemed to be so, and those imperious dames who have been favoured to their liking, do what they can to mortify those who are less happy in their pedestals. Against this disease there is no effectual remedy. Small-sized shoes formerly gave them great hopes of relief, but alas! they generally made cripples of their wearers.

In. I have always observed, that when people have applied to the artist to have that mended which they think the Almighty hath marred, the punishment is connected with the crime as a token of the just resentment of a jealous God, who hath left none of his works imperfect; and who would have them all, as indeed they ought to be, well esteemed. Hence come corns upon the feet, and far greater unevenness in the symmetry of the body, than was before their application to the mechanic.

Fa. Another of my disciples has got hair of a madder red; and such is her folly, that it grieves her beyond measure. But with all my wisdom, I could never find out the reaon why red hair should be any more scandalous than yellow or flaxen locks: or how it is, that scarlet is held to be such a courtly colour upon broadcloth, and yet so scandalous for a lady to have her head of a scarlet colour. But the lady herself is so apprehensive of the scandal, that she is obliged to exchange her native locks with a neighbouring barber, for a set of flaxen false curls! these she flatters herself will very well become the native fairness of her skin.

Perhaps, indeed, to spare the natural crop, she may blind the eyes of beholders with powder, which may help to con-

ceal the awful secret. The like expedient is used by women of a coquetish disposition, when to their great grief and inconsolable sorrow they first perceive old age dyeing a whiteness upon their temples. In order to prevent the world having any suspicion that she is advanced in years, the coquet procures a defence against the appearance of hoary hairs; and thus she keeps herself as much as possible from the belief that she is growing old, till the detested wrinkles on her forehead betray the fatal secret, and then she declines faster than other women, because her grief gives swiftness to her decay. Another lady is exceedingly grieved every time she looks in her glass, because, as she thinks, her face is too much upon the fire to be deemed lovely; but she comforts herself with the reflection that she hath good features, and the great Artist, when he finished her, left a dimple in her chin. On the other hand, her cousin beholds a system of agreeable features in her own countenance; but oh! the dejection of her heart, on recollecting the paleness of her lips. To supply the defects of nature in this, before she goes abroad she has recourse to her pencil and vermilion shell. Thus she has some means of comfort within her power; but her poor sister, who is seamed with the small-pox, is quite inconsolable. If at any time she expresses satisfaction, it is in speaking of the former agreeableness of her features, and fairness of her skin. But alas! her joy is presently clouded with the melancholy consideration they are for ever gone. Some ladies are highly offended because their hands are so big, others that their fingers are too short; and now and then you may meet with one, who is dreadfully tormented underneath a king Richard back; which is sure to prove an intolerable burden all the life of the unhappy woman.

In. Nothing more fully demonstrates our dominion in the hearts of mankind, than their being ashamed of their shapes and physiognomy; the supposed deformity of which they could by no means have prevented. Every degree of this kind of shame, is a tacit reproach of the Creator, and therefore daringly impious. Many you may find, ashamed of the innocent defects of their outward frame, who are not in the least ashamed of their vain lives and immoral conversations; to rectify which, ought to be their principal concern. And were there but as much pains taken to rec-

tify the disorders of civil life, as there are to hide the supposed defects and redundancies of the body, and to alter the tincture of the skin, the world would be very different from what it is. But you take care to prevent that, Impiator.

Di. One who has made mankind no part of his study, would deem it impossible for rational beings to be ashamed of, and concerned for, innocent deformities of the body, with which no person of common sense will ever upbraid them, and which never can by any means lessen the esteem of the judicious (for who can make that straight which the Almighty hath made crooked, or white which he hath made brown?); and at the same time neglect the infinitely more valuable mind.

In. By your account, sir, your vassals have got a wrong notion of beauty; as by our long observation it appears, we may sometimes see a great deal of beauty in a person whose bodily parts no way tend to recommend him. Real beauty lies in the constitution of the mind, and the proper use of its intellectual faculties: every thing else compared with this is like tinsel when compared with the purest gold.

That person appears truly amiable without external comeliness, who can bear the lack of it with a becoming grace; and who, to make up for all outward defects, is studious to embellish the immortal mind. That is a part of man always capable of improvement; but for the body they may fret, murmur, and repine at its defects as much as they will, they plainly see it does not mend the matter; for who by taking thought can add one cubic to his stature, or make one hair whiter or blacker?

Fa. Such is my dominion now, nor was it less in the more early ages. I made rude work in the tents of Jacob between his two wives and among his sons; and by those means I greatly disturbed them whom I could not destroy.

In. I have till now been silent, but beg leave to observe, that I think our labour is far from being lost. Seeing, though we are permitted to destroy none who are good and virtuous, we have the pleasure of distressing and distracting them. And certainly no music can be so agreeable to our ears as the sighs and groans of our enemies. There is something so agreeable in the destruction of infidels and distracting the rest of mankind, that I have often heard our

father Belzebub say, he would rather aggravate his own torment a thousand degrees than he robbed of that pleasure. His and our happiness lies chiefly in distressing mankind, especially the virtuous and good, notwithstanding he overheard Immanuel when he said, "I give unto them eternal life, and none shall pluck them out of my hands."

Av. One would wonder it did not wholly discourage him from making farther attempts against such people, especially if what I have heard is true; I mean that every affliction which they endure by his means, will be an aggravation to his own misery; but his hatred against them is implacable.

Fa. It is not altogether his hatred and malice against them, which excite him to persecute them with such unwearied diligence; but it happened on a time, that Belzebub was by when one of his heavenly heralds declared, "That in all the afflictions of his people, Immanuel himself is afflicted." And at another time he heard another say, "That Immanuel is touched with a sense of human infirmities." Nay, then, said he to himself, they shall not want for afflictions, if I should endure a thousand hells. It will be a heaven of delight to me, to see my fiery darts bound off from the persons to whom they are shot, and strike him whom I have in the most perfect abhorrence. So that it is Immanuel himself, rather than those who believe in him, at whom Satan is so much enraged.

To return to my story.—By my means the knot of sisterhood between Rachael and Leah was untied, friendship and love fled to a distance far remote from their tents. But this was not the finishing stroke of my artifice, for when one generation passed away, you might always be sure to find me with those who made their appearance next upon the stage of action. Hence I was found with the sons of Jacob, and made them perpetrate deeds very unworthy of the patriarchal character, and that even in the lifetime of their father. The destruction of the Hivites by the sword of Simeon and Levi, in revenge of Shechem's rape on their sister Dinah, was wholly by my instigation. They grieved, and that justly; but pride alone called up the demons of revenge and cruelty, who drenched themselves in Canaanitish blood.

When Joseph dreamed of his future advancement, I prevailed with his brethren to hate him, and give admission to every baleful demon; under whose influence, even at the hazard of their father's life, they sold him into Egypt. There I stirred up Sabrina, the wife of Potiphar, to revenge her slighted charms upon him; Joseph himself to swear by the life of Pharaoh, and to carry it very strangely to his brethren in the time of their affliction, notwithstanding he himself had seen such wonders of divine providence, as mentioned by the writer of his life. Just it was that his brethren should have been afflicted for their former perfidy and baseness, but Joseph could never have been persuaded to be instrumental therein, but by my instigation.

Im. I am surprised, sir, you should select the history of those reputed the best of men, for exemplifying your dominion; whereas you make no mention of Ham, Ishmael, Esau, &c. I thought your dominion over them was more full than over the other.

Fa. I mention the best on purpose to save myself trouble, cousin. For when you hear of my power over them, you will easily conceive that my dominion over the rest of mankind must be absolute. I might indeed do myself honour, by telling you of the part I had in the lewdness of Ham, the despite of Ishmael, Esau's revenge, &c. &c., but, as I understand it, all is implied in the present plan of my narrative. Indeed it would be endless to tell you of even a thousandth part of my achievements; and I am persuaded it is more agreeable to you to hear of my occasional prevalence over the virtuous, than to have a full display of my uninterrupted dominion over the infidel part of mankind without it.

Yet it may not be amiss, by way of specimen, to give you one instance of my influence over infidels in general. Amongst the millions I might adduce, I shall refer you to Basuris Pharaoh, king of Egypt, in the days of Moses and Aaron. Notwithstanding the mighty signs and wonders which God wrought by the hand of his Hebrew servants, he was so absolutely under my dominion, that he hardened himself against the Almighty, disregarded the voice of his prophets, and would not suffer the people to go into the wilderness to worship. Moses and Aaron wrought works unprecedented, in the presence of the king

and his nobles; but I persuaded him that the whole was effected by the power of magic, and that Jannes and Jambres, his own enchanters, could do the same, were they called to it.

I had got such possession of his heart before any miracles were wrought, that he thought himself inferior to no being whatever, and scorned subjection even to the Almighty. Pharaoh's magicians in divers instances, by a divine permission, imitating the wonders wrought by Moses and Aaron; he persuaded himself that he was at least equal to that God who sent them, and in the most haughty disdain he said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?"

You have all heard that no man hath hardened himself against God at any time, and hath prospered: nor did he prosper. I hardened his heart against every divine injunction, till the God of the Hebrews utterly confounded the Memphian magicians, and made the haughty monarch not only willing to let the people go, but eager to thrust them out of the land. However they had not travelled very far, before Pharaoh, being a little recovered from his consternation, was induced by me to pursue and oblige them to return to their drudgery, alleging the great loss which both his majesty and the Egyptian monarchy would sustain, by the departure of such a number of vigorous slaves. Pursuant to this purpose, he mustered his chariots and horsemen, all the Egyptian chivalry, and pursued the fugitives; by dint of sword to compel them to return to their spades and wheelbarrows. Every one must praise my noble intentions, for I designed that both hosts should have perished, the one by the sword of the Egyptians, and the other by the thunderbolts of Heaven. I conjectured upon good ground, that if Pharaoh destroyed the Hebrews, the Almighty would avenge their blood upon him and his kingdom.

The hosts of Pharaoh overtook the Hebrews near Pi-ha-hiroth, where the raging ocean met them in the front, and a vast ridge of impassable mountains enclosed them on either hand: "Glory be on me," cried the exulting monarch; "see how my happy stars have hemmed in the fugitives. Now shall they either return to their servitude, or perish on the points of Egyptian swords; and Pharaoh shall no more be upbraided with a God greater than himself." But Pharaoh's boastings were premature; his hopes

were blasted before they were full blown; for it came to pass, that the Almighty took the cause of his people into his own hand, wrought salvation for them, and with a high hand destroyed him and all the Egyptian chivalry.

Business calls me hence, gentlemen; I hold it good that we adjourn till to-morrow.

DIALOGUE XIII.

Av. Indeed, gentlemen, what I tell you is true; you cannot conceive how much I am caressed by the grovelling slaves.

Fa. Do not boast, cousin, nor let it once enter your mind, that your reception amongst mankind is more cordial and hearty than mine; for where there is one person who prostitutes himself to the devil Avaro, there are at least twenty who fall down at the shrine of the adored Fastosus; though I will still own, your craftiness has subdued not a few to your grovelling sway.

Av. Not a few, indeed! every nation furnisheth its quota to make up the number of my abject slaves, who adore me under feigned names suitably adapted to the genius of each country. For instance, in Holland, I am called Mynheer Industry; in France, Monsieur Prudence; in Spain, I bear the name of Don Diligence; in Austria and Russia, as also at the Hague, I am known by the name of Good Policy; and in Great Britain and her colonies, I am called Mister Care, alias Mister Frugality; but my true name, being rightly translated, will read Covetousness.

Great advantages arise to us on the concealment of our proper names. The word covetousness you know is of such a true brimstone colour, that unless I had some method of disguising it, I could get but few adorers in comparison of what I have. There are thousands who delight to keep me under their roofs by the feigned names of Industry and Frugality, who would be afraid to be seen in my company under the name of Covetousness. They rise up early, sit up late, they eat the bread of carefulness, can never get enough of work done by their servants and labourers; they buy as cheap and sell as dear as they can, and are for ever concerting schemes of money-getting, and yet they are not covetous; all the world could not per-

suade them that they are the worshippers of the devil Avaro. Even those whose morning and evening desires run in the following strain: "What shall I do to get money? How shall I manage to keep what I have got out of the reach of pilfering rogues?" Such are their desires, and yet they are not covetous; notwithstanding their increase, they cannot with pleasure assist the needy, unless by so doing they can serve themselves, and yet they are not covetous. Such people are very apt to consider gain as a proof of their godliness; and it is difficult for them to believe a poor man to be honest: if his honesty is so clear that they cannot deny it, they will tacitly charge him with either indolence or want of economy, as they take it for granted, any man may prosper in the world if he will—and yet they are not covetous.

In. Your disciples, Avaro, it seems, have but little acquaintance with that divine Providence which we are constrained to confess—that Providence which emptieth the storehouse of one and fills that of another, according to the dictates of unerring wisdom. But by long observation we have learned that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but to whomsoever the arbiter of the universe is pleased to give the blessing. What most surpriseth me, is to see so many of your people among the professors of religion; do you think they have never heard that those who love the world have not the love of the Father in them, and that friendship with the world is enmity against God? Or do they suppose themselves capable of serving both God and mammon?

Av. With your leave, sir, such texts of Scripture are of no weight with our people. Some consider them as interpolations, others as mistranslated; others still deem them erroneous, therefore not to be regarded; and all agree, that the force of such passages ought to be reasoned away. Yes, brother fiends, you may meet with many, who, if their mental sentiments may be known by their outward conduct, believe themselves capable enough of serving both God and mammon, and that it is very consistent to love both God and the world at the same time. All the week round they are so earnestly engaged in pursuing worldly advantages, that one would suppose they have got an assurance that for one thousand years, at least, to enter upon, their souls shall

not be required of them; or indeed one would think they believe not a syllable of the Bible, or that there is either God or devil, heaven or hell. Yea, so ardent is their chase after gold, they cannot spare so much time as to ask their servants whether they intend for heaven or hell at death? Whether they serve God or the devil? Whether they read the Bible, or idle plays and novels? Whether they go to church or alehouse on a Sunday, or indeed, whether they are pagans or Christians, papists or protestants? And yet they are good Christians themselves, members of churches, and worshippers of the God of heaven.

Notwithstanding their fervent zeal for, and unwearied diligence in the service of mammon, they will not absent themselves from church on a sabbath day on any consideration; but with all sincerity imaginable, with the devotion of one holiday they wipe off the stains of the former six, and on Monday come forth as fresh for the avaricious chase as ever. Thus you see, my subjects by their conduct plainly tell you, they believe it very possible to serve both God and mammon, and thus they give the lie to divine testimony.

It is now as it always was; many people follow religion with the same views as the loaf and fish followers; they take up religion to procure a character among men, that it may serve as a cloak for their mercenary purposes. The person deemed religious being capable of executing avaricious schemes with greater facility and advantage, than the man who is known to be an enemy to all religion.

Fa. It seems, Avaro, your money hunters can adapt religion or any thing to the great end of getting. I know thousands who would not attend the worship of God at all, if they found not their account in it. I have laughed many times at seeing the atheist and the deist come to church and receive the sacrament, to qualify them for places of public concern. It may safely be supposed, that men who believe not the sacrament to be of divine institution, have some ends no way religious to answer by their receiving it. It is not a little droll, too, to see many who for conscience sake dissent from the church of England, when they have the prospect of preferment, come cordially to the altar and receive the consecrated elements from the parish priest. Mortal man could not do more to secure all the emoluments of both church and state to their own party for ever, than

the authors of the test act did; and yet many dissenters play the devil in cheating them. It must be a close hedge indeed, in which some people will not find a hole to creep through.

Im. Ay, uncle, and it is every whit as droll to see many of my subjects, who never attend at church except upon those occasions; men who spend their whole time in drinking, gaming, and whoring, admitted to the table of the Lord, to serve a turn in politics, contrary to every rule, divine and human; and yet those men commence the pillars and governors of the church, without coming near its assemblies on other occasions. These things make amazingly for our interest.

In. Not many days since, your son Discordans gave us a most agreeable account of some of his operations, by the instrumentality of Prejudice and False-Reasoning; I should be glad, my nephew, if you will be pleased to go on with your story.

Di. I have no objection, sir, if my honoured parent will be pleased to permit. But Discordans cannot so much as breathe without the instigation of great Fastosus.

Fa. You do me great honour, my son, and have my permission to proceed; but as I have urgent business in hand, and am already acquainted with your story, I shall leave you for the present, and meet you here to-morrow. Darkness and confusion attend you all.

Di. This same glass, False-Reasoning, is the mirror in which the Jewish clergy, doctors of law, scribes, and pharisees, tried the doctrines and actions of Immanuel and all his followers. By these means they were fatally deceived, and led to reject the council of God against themselves; yea, hardened to that degree, as to say, the light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, is absolutely darkness, and to charge the maker of all things with being a magician; even to put forth their sanguinary hands, and murder the Lord of life.

You may think I was closely employed in those days, as there was not a pharisee in the whole world whom I had not furnished with an inverting mirror and telescope. By these means they became quite enamoured with their own supposed virtue, and held all besides themselves to be accursed; that is to say, heretics, because they know not the

law, *i. e.* they did not measure length and breadth exactly according to the standard of orthodoxy, which in all ages has been the traditions of the elders, and not the Scriptures of truth, as some have erroneously asserted.

Im. Hold, cousin; there I think you must be wrong, for I myself am wont to hear Immanuel (who you know could not lie) refer his hearers to the Scripture for the resolution of all doubts.

Di. That is nothing at all to the purpose, cousin. I readily grant, and none can honestly deny it, that the Scripture is the standard of truth; but truth and orthodoxy are two things, very different, and sometimes diametrically opposite to one another. Bible doctrine is the same in all ages and nations: but orthodoxy in one nation differs at least as much from orthodoxy in another nation, as the several climates do one from another. To go no farther than Britain, you see what is south of the Tweed accounted the purest religion in the world, is, upon travelling farther towards the pole, deemed corrupt, superstitious, and antichristian. So it is *vice versa*. Moreover, what has been orthodox and apostolic in one age, has had the misfortune to become quite heterodox and damnable in the next; so that there is no certain standard of orthodoxy in any nation; but truth is always the same, and knows no standard but one.

Indeed the synod of Dort and the reformers of the English church, have done what mortal men could do to fix an everlasting standard of orthodoxy, by tying all future professors to subscribe their traditions. But even that is insufficient. For by the help of mental reservation many subcribe contrary to their real belief: and others who have not that address, even go without a benefice, let them believe the Bible ever so piously. Yea, I have known many deemed heretics, and burned at a stake, merely for believing the Bible. Orthodox papists, orthodox episcopalians, orthodox presbyterians, and orthodox congregationalists, have all had the honour of putting persons to death for their want of orthodoxy; namely, because they were daring enough to think for themselves contrary to the known maxims of the orthodox priests in every age. You know it is observable, that the orthodox are condescending enough to suffer other people to have thought for them.

Im. What, cousin, has any sect of Christians besides our friends the papists, been found to persecute those who differed from them?

Di. Yes, cousin, every sect who has at any time been happy enough to grasp the reins of government for the time being. The worthy papists bore the bell of orthodoxy for the space of twelve hundred and sixty years, during which time much blood was shed by open massacres, secret assassinations, pretended judicatures, acts of bloody faith; and at last, to finish the bloody reign of antichrist, England, France, the Netherlands, and the vallies of Piedmont, swam with the gore of such who would believe the Bible sooner than the voice of the priests. Queen Mary's reign furnished the orthodox in her day with a fine opportunity of discovering their zeal for the church, by murdering those who believed and obeyed the Bible; but her reign being short, and Elizabeth ascending the throne upon her demise, the other scale rose uppermost, and the protestants in their turn became orthodox; *i. e.* got the government into their hands.

Oh, the violence of reputed orthodoxy! Those same gentlemen were no sooner emerged from prison, than they also let the world know that they were not to be differed from with impunity; that the formula of their faith and worship must be regarded with as implicit obedience as that in the former reign imposed by the papists. Now the presbyterians, independents, and other congregationalists, felt the weight of their rage, or, if you please, zeal for orthodoxy, and the good of the church. Now the prison keepers, and their friend master Ketch, had pretty near as good run of trade as in the reign of Mary. And now the wilds of America began to be well peopled with English protestants and oppressed dissenters; and the good episcopalians at home kept the fleece to themselves, and had all the good of the church before them. But those said presbyterians and independents had no sooner crossed the ocean for conscience sake, and found themselves secure from episcopalian rage, than they themselves commenced orthodox, and set up their own formula as the standard of religion, to which they required as implicit submission from others as the good bishops of England had ere while done from themselves; and now the poor anti-pædobaptists and quakers were taught, that

a mittimus is a mittimus, whether it is signed by a papist, an episcopalian, or a presbyterian; and that sentence of death is to be dreaded as much from the mouth of the latter as of the former. Those same dissenters who had so lately found Old England too hot for themselves, by the glowings of priestly zeal for orthodoxy, soon made New England too hot for the poor quakers and anti-pædobaptists, who to escape the rage for presbytery, fled, the one to Pennsylvania, and the other to Rhode Island; that they might not be compelled to worship God according to other people's consciences and contrary to their own.

In. So then the old spirit of calling down fire from heaven upon heretics, or those who walk in a different way, it seems, has prevailed in modern times as well as of yore. O what a mask is that—human rage in the character of godly zeal! It is wonderful to see people glorifying the Prince of liberty by shutting their brethren up in a dungeon for conscience sake! worshipping the Saviour of men's lives by putting people to death, because they will worship him in a different form; and it is as wonderful that the ambassadors of peace (as they call themselves) should be the principal agents of this violence.

Di. But for the ambassadors, persecution had never been known in the world, sir. The laity have so little zeal for God, that they would, if not instigated by the clergy, suffer men to worship him according to the best understanding they have of his mind, revealed in the Bible. But the ambassadors are quite of another opinion; for by them it is determined, that God should be worshipped in the very mode by them directed, or he shall not be worshipped at all, if they can help it. The honour of persecution, alias punishing of heretics, must all be ascribed to the reverend ambassadors.

Im. By ambassadors, I suppose, cousin, you mean popish priests, in contradistinction from protestant ministers.

Di. I mean both papists and protestants, cousin: and with me it is not very easy to determine which best deserve the honourable appellation.

But to return to my story. I taught the respectable pharisees in general the use of my instruments, which, as you saw in the late experiment, perfectly invert every object; and so, by my prudent management, those very people,

held to be the most religious of the Jews, were brought up to such a degree of self-conceit, as to fit them for executing the will of the devil; still supposing that they were doing good service to the God of Israel. Contemplated under the reflection of my ingenious instruments, those pharisees, who were darkness itself, considered themselves as angels of light; and each became so enamoured of his own personal excellence, that all who were not of their sect and persuasion were held in the most consummate abhorrence; as accursed and ignorant of their traditions; yea, even enemies to the Almighty.

They viewed Immanuel, the brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of his perfection, by the help of my glasses, in which, to them, he appeared as one come from Belzebub, and performing miracles in the spirit and power of the great apostate. His immediate disciples were, indeed, men of whom the world was not worthy; yet viewed by the help of these notable instruments, they appeared as creatures the most despicable. Although men of peaceful principles, willing to spend and be spent for the good of mankind, they were held to be enemies to the public good; men who turned the world upside down; unworthy of a dwelling in the tents of humanity, and therefore thrust out of the world with violence. Such wonderful works were accomplished of old by the help of these amazing instruments; and still they are perfect as ever, and fit for operation.

Even at this day, when the whole system of revealed truth is examined by my inverting mirror, it is misapprehended as cunningly devised fables; a well-concerted system of falsehood; or a priestly imposition on the consciences and understanding of the laity. Yes, my fellow destroyers, by my wise government, many who value themselves as the greatest masters of reason, are so absolutely stupid as to suppose that the eternal God has left men at large without any given law or revelation of his mind, to which their submission is required. Being thus stupidly absurd, you will not wonder that the same masters of reason have been ingenious enough to find out that this world, unwieldy as it is, was dexterous enough to create itself, and possesseth wisdom enough to be its own governor.

In. By your leave, cousin. This last part of your account belongs to my administration. You preside only over dissension and division. I want to hear some of your operations of this kind.

Di. True, sir. But if I preside over dissensions, divisions, animosities, &c., you know I must be allowed to use proper means by which my works are to be propagated; for I am not like those human fools, who expect the end without using the means. Besides, sir, that one devil should assist another, is by no means against the laws of our fraternity. If I, to promote my beloved discord, call in the assistance of your bewildering influences; I also, in a kind return, by the divisions which I foment, greatly strengthen the slavish bands of great infidelity. Our interest being mutual, I hope the worthy Infidelis will never grumble to lend me all possible assistance in striving to make this earth, as much as may be, to resemble the regions of the damned. Moreover, our great prince and parent is no way careful about which of his illustrious family is the instrument in damning a soul, so that the work of damnation is effected.

In. I have no objection, cousin, to assisting you, or any of our kindred. All I desire is, to have due notice taken of my influence. Our leading view ought undoubtedly to be the destruction of men, in compliance with the will of our great ancestor. But I detain you.

Di. The ancient pharisees were not the only dupes I have had in the world. The great man at Rome, the father of the world, and head of the church of antichrist, has been as much my dupe as people of less eminence, as I shall shew you in the sequel.

In. What, cousin, have you become acquainted with my old friend? I should like to know how that came to pass, and what acquaintance you have with him.

Di. I accomplished it in the following manner. I presented his supreme holiness with a pair of my instruments, of the right Luciferian construction, on purpose that he might by their assistance try all the bulls he should publish, and all the causes which should come before him. For it ought to be observed, the time was, when the whole world wondered after his infallible judgment. Infallible, so given out, and so for many ages received. Yea, so powerful, so

efficacious has been the word of his holiness, that ere now his very breath has blown the crown off from the head of one prince upon that of another. So very extensive his sovereign sway, that to give a kingdom to a devoted friend was no more to him, than to give a snuff of sneezing would be to a trusty highlander.

From the use of my instruments, there arises a necessity that his holiness's bulls, &c. should be the most perfect antichristianism; so that in the inverting mirror they may assume the likeness of unerring truth. It is the same with the persons and things which the hoary father is concerned with; the sentence is, in general, contrary to the real intrinsic merit of the party or cause. Hence we find a turbulent Becket canonized for a saint, and placed among the Roman deities; and a pious Cranmer condemned to the stake. Regicide is rewarded as meritorious, whilst walking according to the dictates of conscience is held altogether damnable, both in this and the future world.

From the proper application of this mirror, popish bulls, decrees of councils, canons of churches, human-composed formulas of worship, are supposed to be stamped with divine authority; whilst the Bible, that only revelation of the divine mind, is considered not only as insufficient to shew to men the way of salvation, but even dangerous to be read by the laity; and is absolutely forbidden their use, lest, by knowing too much of the will of God, they should perish from the popish faith: so the good old vicar obliges the laity to go to hell blindfolded without complaining.

Nothing can be more certain, than that either his holiness the pope, or the writers of the Scriptures, must be mistaken. The former says, the Bible is dark, mysterious, difficult to be understood, and even dangerous to the souls of men; whereas the latter say, the Scripture way of salvation is so plain and easy, that the wayfaring man, though a stranger, though even a fool, shall not err therein. The pope has for weighty reasons been pleased to forbid the use of the Scriptures, under the heavy penalty of death and damnation; Jesus, the author of the Bible, commands all men to search the Scriptures; and his Spirit, in Paul, applauds this conduct in the noble Bereans. Surely this points out the very person of antichrist. His holiness at Rome, and all other great leaders of the church, are of opinion

that the Scripture is not of itself sufficient to be the guide of conscience, the rule of faith and practice; therefore canons, creeds, liturgies, &c., are introduced to make the formula of worship more complete. But Paul the apostle tells mankind, that the Scripture is able, through God, to make them wise to salvation. So that the one or the other must needs be mistaken.

Im. His holiness of Rome was in the right to forbid reading of the Bible, and they find their account in so doing. The old Bible, I am told, tolerates even a Gospel minister to lead about a wife, but confines him to one only. Therefore this Bible did not suit my good friends of the priesthood. But the pope's bible, which forbids to marry, and enjoins an unreserved auricular confession, gives the gentlemen of the cloth an opportunity, under the pretence of being righteous more than others, of being lascivious to the uttermost, and to defile all the nuns in the convent. What full-fed friar would not choose a free admission into such a seraglio, rather than be confined by sacred marriage to one only wife? With them it is a rule that much pleasure arises from variety.

Di. So, cousin, I find you are acquainted with our old friends the priests of Rome?

Im. I have been long acquainted with them. Why, cousin, the greatest part of them dwell in my canton of literal fornicators, and they are all freemen in the district of mystical whoredom.

Di. I have taken care to furnish every true member of the Italian church with a partial telescope, by the help of which he takes a false view of the members of all other communities whatever; and in the very spirit of the ancient pharisees, holds all to be accursed who are not of his communion. By these means also, the holiness of real saints is called heresy, and the heresy of the papists obtains the name of holiness. The will-worship, superstition, and idolatry of those sons of the mystic whore, they call piety; whilst the pure, spiritual worship of God in Christ, is by them termed schism and heresy.

In my instruments the papists, in general, view the righteousness of Immanuel as the ground of man's acceptance with God; and therefore, say they, "It is all chimera, a mere shadow, a doctrine of licentious tendency, unfit to be

published amongst mankind." But when they consider their own personal merit by the help of my telescope, they are ravished with their own supposed excellency. "A righteousness of our own," say they, "is a work of substance, and will bear our dependance. Here is righteousness of my own working out, enough to obtain the favour of God, and to spare. Blessed be my own hands for working out my salvation, and more than my salvation. Adored be my own heart for possessing more than holiness sufficient to bring me to heaven." Of the same opinion is the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, with whom it is plain, that the grace of God is insufficient to salvation, without the co-operation of the creature; who yet is confessedly incapable of doing any thing aright. There is a very near relation between the old gentleman at Rome, and his kinsman at the Foundry. Both are popes, though the latter is much more diminutive than the former.

There was a time when the whole assemblage of priests took it into their heads to promote their own religion, and to suppress that which had any tendency to lessen the importance of the sacerdotal order. For their more success they inquired of my mirror as an oracle, for direction as to means most proper for the purpose. Answer was given, "By the power of the sword." Therefore in the popish bible it is written, "Those who, in contempt of holy church, shall take upon them to live according to the dictates of conscience and Scripture, shall die the death, and their estates shall be confiscated to the prince of the realm, provided always that one full moiety of every such estate shall without deduction be returned to his holiness at Rome, the prince over the kings of the earth. Moreover, whoever shall hesitate about yielding his conscience to the guidance of the priest, and shall not with apparent willingness bind his soul to the horns of the pontifical altar, shall be deemed and damned for a heretic: that is, shall be burned out of this world at a stake, and shall burn for ever in the world to come, according to the good pleasure of his merciful holiness."

In. Ah, cousin, the devil was sadly outwitted in that affair; for although the burning of heretics was a pleasing diversion to our good friends the priests for the time being, it has brought them into contempt which will prove ever-

lasting. Having set the world upon reflection, it is now found to our grief that the religion of Jesus has no connexion with a spirit of intolerance, which, wherever it obtains, is known to be the spirit of antichrist. One would really suppose, that the successor of St. Peter has quite forgotten the injunction given his predecessor, to cease from the use of the sword and let it abide in its sheath, seeing he accounts its edge to be the most convincing of all arguments. But I interrupt your story, cousin.

Di. Often have I seen the whimsical hermit and fantastical devotee, take an ample view of his own religious proceedings with this partial telescope and inverting mirror; and thus sounds the voice of self-applause from the hermitical cell at the bottom of Sinai, or on the top of Ararat: "Lo, what a high degree of holiness my own self-denial and assiduity have procured me! Behold what great good my crucifixion of the flesh, and separation from the world, have wrought out for me! for which I may thank my own resolution. By my pious diligence I have attained holiness sufficient to qualify me for, and good works more than enough to entitle me to, heaven. Happy I, who have made such a good improvement of my time! Unlike to those indolent people who, when they die, are obliged either to purchase their pardons at an advanced price, or to lie for ages in the flames of purgatory, burning away their rebellions. I shall get safe to heaven without so much as touching at that flaming prison on my journey."

Im. Dear cousin, how I have laughed; laughed myself out of breath, strong and healthy as my lungs are, to see the papal penitent after he has in holy zeal whipt himself with the cat-o'-nine-tails, for the length of several streets, till the impious offending gore has laid on the stones. Enamoured with his own fortitude in so belabouring the sinful flesh, I have seen him, after his penitential work was finished, examine every stripe by the help of my valuable instruments; and as he viewed, he cried with the voice of exultation, "Ah, how infatuated are those who hope to get to heaven in a whole skin; without mortifying and punishing the wicked flesh! To expose themselves to such severe exercises in the discipline of purgatory, for want of devotion enough to submit to the discipline of the church; how impious! But I shall have a speedy entrance into happi-

ness on my dissolution; for I mortify the members of this body, and these wounds religiously inflicted voluntarily by my own hand, will be as so many mouths to intercede for me with the Almighty."

Av. So then, cousin, the intercession of Immanuel is quite out of the question with your penitents, I perceive. And indeed those people who can whip themselves to heaven, cannot have much need of his advocacy and intercession. If the whip well applied can save a man from destruction, one would be apt to conclude, that Immanuel might have saved himself the expense of such bloody sufferings and agonizing sorrows as he underwent.

Di. That is true, cousin; but their first concern is not with Immanuel, but his holiness the pope. Not about the favour of God, but that of his reverence the priest, who is thought to have all the orators of heaven under his influence. Therefore those that hope for favour with the inhabitants of heaven, must be very careful not to lose the good graces of the parson; for it is thought, that no man can meet with a cordial reception in the other world, but what brings proper credentials with him from the ghostly guide of his conscience in this. But death is a wonderful instructor, and teaches the poor beguiled criminals lessons which they never thought of in life; and amongst others, this important one: "That the favour of the pope and priest can be no more service to a dying man, than the favour of Mahomet."

When the true-born sons of the scarlet whore are pleased to view the protestants with my telescope, indignation rises in the heart; and thus they give vent to their zeal and vengeance: "Ah, what a goodly heaven would it be to see those heretics broiling in the flames of hell; when shall vengeance fall to the uttermost upon those, who dare despise the authority of the church and its holy high-priest."

In. It is allowed on all hands in the church of Rome, that to protest against the pope's supremacy, and disbelieve his infallibility, is the sin unpardonable; for which no dispensation whatever can be obtained from the clergy, however much their so doing may be approved in heaven. And it is an article of the papal faith, that fire and faggot, rack and gibbet, are the most convincing, or rather invincible, of all arguments; therefore never to be omitted in the decision of religious disputes.

Im. When we consider, sir, that his holiness of Rome is not such an able logician as Jesus of Nazareth, and hath a religion very different from his to defend; we must allow that he is in the right of it to reason with the edge of the coercive weapon. Fraudulent religion is liable to many disadvantages, from which that of truth is free; and although the one will eternally stand of itself against all the machinations of darkness, the other will require the assistance of violence and intolerance to uphold it. Who then can blame their papal reverences for pulling the sword from its scabbard in order to convince gainsayers? I have seen many by dint of sound reasoning most grievously confound the holy fathers, who became like dumb dogs that could not bark before them; in a moment's time silenced by the end of a cord, or some other such irrefutable argument. These are wonderful ways of enlightening the consciences of heretics, gentlemen. But I pray you, cousin Discordans, have you no concern among the protestants?

Di. Not a little, cousin, which to-morrow I may give you some account of, but at present must forbear, the usual time of interview being elapsed. Adieu, my kinsmen, adieu.

DIALOGUE XIV.

Di. Yes, gentlemen, strange as it may seem, I assure you my advantages by these instruments are great, and my influence even over protestants not to be despised. Though, it is true, I am at no pains to prejudice the protestants against the papists, or to make use of my instruments in order to render the latter more disagreeable than they really are. For whilst in the body, it is impossible to make a thoroughbred papist more diabolical than he is already. I leave it therefore with the protestants to examine the worshippers of the pope in the mirror of revealed truth, by which the antichristianism of that religion is sufficiently detected, and all the fallacy of priestcraft is brought to open light. But,

Great is the business which I do between one protestant and another; who although they unanimously agree to shake off the papal yoke, are most grievously divided among themselves. They abominate the high and arrogant pretensions of Rome; yet they themselves are severally the most orthodox, and drink deeper into the spirit of popery

than they are perhaps aware of, even of the precious spirit of intolerance and bigotry.

When a zealous churchman, such as Sacheverel, or his lordship of L——ff, or a Durell, Nowel, or Blacket, examines his own party with my telescope or mirror, how enamoured is the good man on the discovery of his own excellency! how much of the self-opinionated strain flows from his boasting lips. "There is no doubt," says he, "but our church is truly apostolical; the purest church in the whole world. We hold fast the form of sound words, and are not forgetful of the tradition of the elders."

In. No, cousin, they are not forgetful of tradition; for with all the pompous parade of lordly prelates, there is not a small part of the episcopalian formula that derives its existence from the traditions of even the Romish fathers. Cringing and curtsying when the name of Jesus is pronounced; worshipping with the face towards the east; keeping of lent and other holidays, besides the Christian sabbath; fasting on Fridays; crossing in baptism, with a great many more, are all sprung from the Italian fountain. In like manner the names of their priests evidently shew that the pope stood godfather at their christening. And he that but looks on their canonical robes, must be instantly convinced that they are cut in the true Italian taste. However they are not the only protestants who hanker after papal customs, for even the Geneva cloak itself discovers the tailor's acquaintance with the shops of Italy. And yet to hear the Calvinists boast of their reformation from popery, one would think we could not find so much as a shred of the strumpet's garments within the pale of their presbytery.

Di. It is a rule with mankind in general, to look out narrowly for the mote in the eye of another, whilst they tenderly pass by the beam which is in their own eye; and as we have brought the world into such a state of disorder, it is no difficult matter for the eye of jealousy to find faults enow. Sometimes I clap my telescope to the eye of a true son of the church, and direct him to survey the whole body of dissenters; he obeys, and then exclaims, "These same round-heads are schismatics, prone to strife and sedition; self-sufficient, turbulent and uneasy bigots; haters of apostolic discipline, and lovers of licentiousness: who therefore

spit in the face of their mother, and wickedly leave the purest church in the world."

Im. I pray you, cousin, are there none apostolical besides the episcopalians?

Di. O yes, cousin Impiator, all are apostolical, if their own testimony is to be credited; all the Romish clergy are apostolical, and give it out that Peter the fisherman was their great-grandfather. The church of Scotland is also apostolical; and the power of the twelve apostles is thought to have been transferred to the Scotch presbytery. The independents are apostolical also, on account of the soundness of their doctrine, and regularity of some part of their discipline. But both they and the north country clergymen labour under some disadvantages; for the latter have lost the deed of transfer, which conveyed the authority of the apostles unto the presbytery; and the former are unhappy enough to be unable to produce either precept or precedent from the apostles for infant sprinkling, which is notwithstanding a foundation doctrine, and by them accounted Christian baptism. The baptists, or, as the independents and methodists respectfully call them, anabaptists, you may be sure are not less apostolical than their neighbours, having, besides all the advantages claimed by the independents, the enjoyment of baptism according to the primitive institution. So that no defect whatever, in point of a Gospel spirit, can hinder them from being apostolical.

Even Mr. Wesley and his preachers give themselves out to be apostolical, notwithstanding Mr. Wesley asserts that salvation is by works, which the apostle Paul denied. No contradiction whatever will hinder the teachers of the people from considering themselves as apostolical. When I am used to attend the Sandemanian church after service time, and divert myself with their playing at blindman's buff, I confess I could not easily gather from what part of the apostles' conduct they derived their warrant for this game; any more than for cards, skittles, attending plays and masquerades, going to Vauxhall, Ranelagh, &c. &c.; and yet this is the only apostolic church in the world, in its own esteem, taken in its proper connexions. However it is said, some of the oldest pillars of the church having had their shins repeatedly broken, and the elders' noses having been smitten even to bloodshed, they have laid

aside that dangerous play of blindman's buff, so very apostolical a few years ago, and have found out ways and means of becoming little children, less dangerous and more becoming their infant capacities, by which they may spend the evening of every sabbath.

Im. By your leave, cousin: I have often been puzzled to find out how it is the prelates of the church of England came to be apostolical, and I protest I cannot after all unriddle the mystery. I have heard my father say, that the apostles were never consecrated to any see whatever in England, and that there were not half the number of apostles there are of prelates, even in this island. Moreover, I have heard him say, the archbishops and bishops of the English church are the successors of the archflamins and flamins, the dignitaries of the old British pagan church, prior to the days of Lucius. Now, if they hold the honours and revenues of the pagan clergymen, how is it that they are apostolical? Is it because the name is changed from flamin to bishop, or how?

Certain it is the English bishops must be of a more noble order than the apostles. They are lord bishops; they possess great revenues; they are clothed in soft raiment, and dwell in kings' courts; they are too high, too polite, too dignified, to preach in a common assembly, or indeed in any other more than twice or thrice a year. But the apostles were men of mean extraction, not lords, not right reverends: plain Paul, Peter, James, &c.; they were contented if their revenues would purchase food and raiment for them; they seldom appeared among great men, in kings' courts, otherwise than in quality of prisoners; they were willing to spend and be spent, in preaching the Gospel to all people, and on all occasions; they had no carriages, no equipages; they had nothing to glory of but their afflictions, which fell upon them in every place wherever they came.

In. There is some weight in your reasoning, my son, and they will understand it hereafter. But in the mean while it is not clever in the churchmen, however zealous, to charge the nonconformists with having separated from the church. The church of England in her rubric defines a church to be "a congregation of faithful men, where the word is preached, and the ordinances are administered;" from whence it is plain, a church may meet in a house which

has never a steeple; and a man may leave the house of parish worship, or what is called the parish church, and yet cleave to a congregation of faithful men and women, where the ordinances are administered and the word preached; which the rubric, as before observed, acknowledges to be the true church. Churches are built of living stones, which never a parish church nor cathedral in England is; therefore a departure from them can never with propriety be said to be a schism in the church. My good friend, the high-churchman, is somewhat unkind to the nonconformists in this affair.

Di. I allow it, sir. But I assure you the nonconformist perfectly understands the law of retaliation, and is an adept in the use of my instruments. In some zealous hour of self-approbation you may hear his thoughts about the episcopalians: "These episcopalians, "says he," these mongrels, are monsters in religion; like Ephraim, they are neither baked nor unbaked, but like a cake not turned; neither good protestants nor right papists. Partly they worship God, and partly they obey the pope. What consistency can there be in such a jumbled religion? Can there be any good where there is so much papal dross and refuse? Any true religion, where there is so much false traditional superstition? Can there be any thing of the substance, where there is so much of the shadow?" So you see there is never a sect of protestants, but will occasionally do the devil a kindness, in their treatment of one another.

In. This language of the nonconformists is not general, cousin; for there are many of them who can believe that a person may really be saved, although even not of their community; and that all who differ from them, are not to be treated as absolutely enemies to God and all religion. The like may be said of the good people of the church of England; for amongst them you will find some who do not really think that every dissenter is absolutely in a state of damnation, and hope at least that a man may escape hell, even though he never sets his foot in the parish church. However, I have often been highly diverted at hearing the church parson, on the one hand, railing against the neighbouring dissenters as worse than papists, instead of preaching the Gospel; and, on the other hand, the dissenter with the greatest dexterity bandying back the curse upon his

reverence, as a dog that barks at the sheep of Christ. Prejudice, cousin, deals all in extremes; it never touches on the middle path of judgment—the path reserved for the gentle steps of candour.

Di. It is not enough that I persuade the more bigoted part of both conformists and nonconformists, reciprocally to consider each other as the avowed and incorrigible enemies of Christianity, and themselves to be its warmest votaries. But I find means to procure the noncons a sight of each other in my celebrated telescope, and each to treat the different denominations with as much rigour and injustice, as if they were not followers, or did not profess to be followers of one and the same Saviour. The hottest episcopalian rage ever felt by their forefathers, discovered not more bigotry than what some of them discover against one another.

I was greatly edified the other day in paying a visit to an eminent quaker, who, when with curious eye he was examining my instruments, was moved by the spirit of self-conceit, to examine, try, cast, and condemn all the sects of professors around him, as destitute of the inward power of religion; and thus, having the telescope at his eye, he began: "Friend Episcopalius, I perceive thou art so carried away with the form, that thou carest not for the power of religion. Vain man! shadows are thy delight, and thou little regardest the substance. Dost thou think, friend Episcopalius, that the spirit is in the service-book? Why dost thee not read friend Barclay's apology? Dost thou suppose that Christian ministers are ever to be seen shrouded in Romish weeds and surplices? How can thy steeple-house be a receptacle of the meek and peaceful saints, when there is such a clinking of bells from the top of it? Is it not more likely a synagogue of Satan, whose servants are turbulent and noisy? Thy ministers preach for hire, friend; they take tithes and offerings from the people; and how can they then be ministers of Jesus Christ? I advise thee, friend Episcopalius, to consider thy ways, and turn to the light within thee; then thy priests will let one shirt at a time serve their turn, and will no longer preach for tithes and offerings. Then shalt thou thyself be led to renounce the fantasies of this vain life, and solicit neither for church nor state preferment; but wilt content thyself with getting

money in a way of trade, like our self-denying brethren. I say again, vain man, consider how worldly are thy practices.

"As for you, my friends of the presbyterian and independent denominations, I allow that ye do not conform to the corrected mass-book, for which some praise is due to you. But, alas! ye conform to the world, notwithstanding. Look ye, friends, your women wear ribbons of unholy colours; rings of gold, polluted by the profane hands of the silversmith; yea, ruffles, furbelows, and heads frizzled up to an enormous height, of downright French profaneness; your women are ladies, madams, and misses; all of which indicate that ye are destitute of the inward power, and neglect to look to the light within you. Yea, examine by your own clothes, ye who call yourselves gentlemen, and see what irreligion discovers itself in every part of their fabrication. Do you see, friends, your parsons wear clothes of an idolatrous black, and bands starched with superstition, after the manner of popish and episcopalian hirelings? Ye make ministers, sprinkle your infants, use ordinances, and, like all other worldlings, are as much attached to shadows as if the substance were not come; yea, your clothes in general are made of unholy colours; such as are worn by the servants of the flesh: ye wear buttons, made of metal digged out of the bowels of this sinful earth; even pocket-holes impiously gaping in the fore-skirts of your upper garment; and, to add to the height of your carnality, your hats are wickedly cocked, after the manner of the sons of antichrist. I charge you all, ye presbyterians and independents, to turn to the light within you, and that will lead you to the substance. Then will ye forsake all these lying and worldly vanities.

"As for thee, my friend Baptismus (continued the serious quaker), thou art worse than all the rest; they have fairly given up some of the ordinances which were in use in the apostles' days, but thou retainest every punctilio; in this, therefore, thou art formal and superstitious. By leading of people to submit to those primitive ordinances, thou dishonourest the light within thee, which teaches those who obey it to despise ordinances, as thou seest in the case of our brethren. Besides, thy clothes are of a dark colour, like those of other hirelings and men made preachers.

Why dost thou not imitate our elders in wearing cloth of a religious colour, even of a holy drab? Observe me, friend, thy hat is cocked after a popish manner, and thou wearest a button and a loop upon it, after the fashion of antichrist; why hast thou not hooks and eyes to raise it only to a half bend, after the manner of the spiritual?

"It appears but too plainly, friend Baptismus, that thou art still in the world. Thy preachers also wear popish cambric on their bosom; preach for hire; and assume the epithet of reverend. Thee and thy friends make a mighty bustle about what thou callest the Scripture. I pray thee, friend, turn thee from that dead letter to the author of it within; so shalt thou be taught to contemn ordinances as we do, and to give honour to none of thy fellow-creatures, how much soever it may be due.

"But thou, my friend Wesley, comest more near to the standard than any of thy neighbours; thy priests are not hirelings, having only food and raiment, and thou wisely takest care of the rest; neither are they of human manufacture, but are all, like unto our elders, sent forth by special commission from heaven, from whence thou sayest that thou derivest thy own commission.

"Thou preachest the free agency of man also, and shuttest none out from heaven besides those who will not fulfil thy conditions, or, as our elders say, refuse to obey the dictates of the true light within them. Nevertheless, thou fallest short of perfection; for though thou despisest the bishops as dumb dogs, thou art mightily taken with the steeple-house; and although thou thyself wilt be subject to no ordinance but what thou thinkest meet, thou superstitiously bindest both thy preachers and people to the observance of every right of what thou callest the church. I pray thee, friend John, why dost thou pinch thy belly on Fridays? What seest thou in the fifth hour more than in the ninth, that thou shouldest set it apart for what thee callest devotion? Why shouldest thou exhort thy preachers to read the Scriptures with thy notes, to read thy other tracts in preference to all others; to pray at certain hours, as if the Spirit were at their command; and to preach twice every day of their lives? Thou art too formal, friend, and regardest not duly the light within thee."

In. And so your friend the quaker is pleased to tell all

the world, that he is possessed of the spirit of bigotry and self-conceit. However, he is not the only bigot in the world. Bigotry is an epidemical distemper among mankind, and I know no greater bigots than the people who profess to be the warmest votaries for unlimited charity. Who was ever more bigoted than friend Barclay and his quaking brethren? Or who in the world is more bigoted and dogmatical at this day, than the reverend principal of the Foundry, that great votary for universal redemption, and the spontaneous agency of men? So very highly is this gentleman esteemed by many of his people, that I have heard his labours extolled above those of Paul the apostle; and indeed himself accounted to be one of the two witnesses spoken of in the Apocalypse. But in this they must be mistaken, unless by sackcloth, in which the witnesses prophesied, we are to understand prunello; for in black prunello, instead of sackcloth, has all the prophecies of Mr. John been published.

Di. My friend the quaker, having triumphantly surveyed the supposed imperfections of his neighbours, turned the telescope towards himself; then gathering his muscles into a smile of self-complacency, he said, "Yea, it is evident that I am a true follower of the light within, for I give honour to no man, how much soever it is due; prince and peasant, noble and ignoble, are all the same to me, my fellow-creatures and equals. In farther obedience to the inward light, I do not pray, not once in seven years, unless moved by an impulse from the Spirit. My inward Bible I often read, but the dead letter of external Scripture I leave to those who are fond of shadows. My raiment too is all made of an approved colour, even of sanctified drab; and my linen is plain, though fine and neatly dressed. Yea, and Martha my good wife too is separated from the world, and is a suitable help-meet to a spiritual man; she wears no furbelows, no profane cardinals, capuchins, dominos, &c.; but all her apparel is rich, good, and plain, becoming a separation from the world.

In. With the quaker's good leave, I think the faults he finds in his neighbours, are but like gnats when compared to the huge camels which, to my certain knowledge, he himself can swallow without straining. Besides the virtues of which he makes his boast, even supposing them to be

virtues, are all external, and are no more than tithes paid of anise, mint, and cummin; whilst the weightier matters of the law are neglected, perhaps, even by this precisian.

Av. I have often wondered what it is that makes a drab colour more religious and becoming than another; yet certainly it must be so, for the quakers are wise, very wise, and could not be imposed on, as every tradesman who deals with them is ready to testify. Amongst my disciples, I have heard amazing accounts of the wisdom of the quakers, and the use they are of, in teaching even novices wisdom by their provident example. However, I have as much wondered what the papists, episcopalians, and every other sect of professors, discern so amiable and lovely in black, as to induce them to make it a canonical colour; and almost, if not altogether, essential to the ministrations of the word. No doubt they have heard that Belzebub is said to be dressed in raiment of the deepest black, and one would wonder they should desire their ministers to be clothed in the same uniforms, seeing they professedly have declared war against him and all his principalities. Yet so it is; for any other than dark-coloured clothes upon a minister would frighten an auditory out of their pews, and the best of sermons would not be worth hearing, if the preacher were not invested in the sacerdotal livery.

Fa. It is I, my friends, even I, who am at the bottom of that religious whim. But for me, white would be thought to become the pulpit as well as black, and green would be as holy as gray. I call it whim, because the greatest of the Nazarenes, in ancient times, knew no colour which was more holy than the rest; and the same clothes in which the apostle Paul made his tents, served him as canonical robes, in which he also preached the Gospel. By this you may see that my influence is very extensive, even in religious things.

Im. What, uncle, had not Paul a gown and cassock in which he preached, and a surplice in which he offered up his prayers?

Fa. No, Impiator. Where should he have them? You may know that the gown, surplice, &c. were contrived by the man of sin, I mean the son of perdition, whose principal seat is at Rome; but in the days of the apostle he was not revealed, notwithstanding the mystery of popish

doctrine had indeed began to work. But all this while we forget our good friend the quaker.

In. Indeed, brother, we do not use the quaker handsomely in so long neglecting of him; but to make him some amends I must tell you, that I have often laughed heartily to hear those precise gentry exclaim against the form of religion by others adhered to, as if they themselves were nothing but spirit, when at the same time they are as formal a people as any upon earth. And in truth very few of them know any thing at all of religion, besides that very imperfect form which they have adopted. But we are wise enough to keep our thumb upon that; for if the cheat were discovered, I am afraid they would be glad to embrace that part of the form of religion which they reject, in order to obtain the power of it, of which the far greater part of them now are destitute.

Di. I can tell you the quakers are liberally paid back in their own coin. And amongst every sect of protestants hitherto mentioned, you will find some who seldom or never look at the people called quakers but through my telescope. Were you by when the quaker is examined by the rest of the protestants, you would almost split your sides with laughing at their partiality and unfair representation. Say they, "the quakers' religion lies all in their dress, speech, and money getting. Their religion lies not in the head, but in broad-brimmed half-cocked hats. Not in their hearts, but in their coats. Not in their actions, but in their tongues. All their public meetings are calculated to promote the great end of getting money and increasing commerce;—are not religious, but merely political."

By this you may see that the quakers are abused and belied in their turn, as well as they abuse and belie others. The above reflections are just enough when applied only to some, or to a great many of them, but will by no means hold as a general rule; seeing you all know, there is now and then a quaker who breaks away from his subjection to the god of this world; and, despiting all that we and our sable clan can do to prevent it, gets safe within the palace of Immanuel. Moreover, there are at those public meetings some, though comparatively few, who have a truly religious design in giving their attendance. From these

things you may see, my friends, that prejudice deals all in extremes, and knows not how to speak favourably.

In. That is a gross mistake, into which we have with great vigilance ensnared the posterity of Adam. When a small number only of any particular body of people are found guilty of a certain evil, the crime is usually charged upon the whole; and the precipitate injudicious conclusion is, "they are all alike." For instance, the Munster baptists were once guilty of certain outrages, with which the whole sect of anti-pædobaptists are to this day very uncharitably calumniated. And because very many of the quakers are amazingly wise to get money, and to keep it when it is procured, it is often said they are all such, and that Avaro is their lawgiver.

Hey day! whither is the rule of moral equity gone, that the professors of religion cannot set their eyes upon it? Where is that candour and benevolence which the Christian religion everywhere recommends, that you, cousin, have gained such an ascendancy over them?

Di. By the instrumentality of these glasses, I got the preachers of salvation by grace traduced as antinomians, and the doctrines of the word of God bespattered, as so many sources of licentiousness. For instance, the preacher, as his duty is, declares, "That salvation is not of works, but grace;" and may thus reason with the people: "You can do nothing that will recommend you to the favour of God: the Ethiopian may change his hue, and the leopard his spots, as soon as you, who are accustomed to do evil, can change your own nature, and learn to do well; for it is not of works of righteousness which ye have done, or can do, that your salvation cometh; but merely by the calling of free mercy." I instantly clap my telescope to the eye of the legalist, and he exclaims, "What an enemy to good works in this same wretched antinomian! According to him, we may as well do nothing, as strive to procure the favour of God; may as well lead lives the most vile and profligate, as study to live righteously and holily; for, according to this same preacher, our wickedness is as acceptable to God, as our most holy and virtuous living. Yea, more acceptable; for he declares, that harlots and publicans shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, sooner than

those who do what they can to procure eternal life by their holiness and good works."

Such is the language not only of the vulgar and ignorant, but of many who profess to know much of religion. Whenever the self-sufficient Arminius is in the humour to try the doctrines of the Gospel in my inverting mirror, and the preachers of them in my partial telescope, he very candidly and with great liberality bestows upon them such as the following reflections: "These wretched Calvinists represent the Almighty God as a partial and unmerciful being, who hides his Gospel and withholds his grace from men of virtue, wisdom, and prudence, whilst he reveals himself to the most notorious transgressors. They say that a man of a regular inoffensive life may perish for ever, when a murderer like Manasseh, a polluted prostitute as Magdalen, and a wicked oppressor like Zaccheus, shall be saved. If this is true, then we had better live notoriously wicked, than sober, righteous, and godly lives. What wretched, what dangerous doctrine is this! They make God to be the author of sin too; for they say that nothing comes to pass, but by divine appointment or permission. They talk also of some horrible decree, in which God is said to have ordained the things which are coming and shall come. No need of holiness, if salvation is not of him that willeth; no need of diligence, if it is not of him that runneth, but to whom the Almighty sheweth mercy. If God hath mercy only upon whom he will have mercy, and hardeneth whom he will, we may live as we please; for if to be saved we shall not be damned, what diabolical doctrine is this!"* Thus the Arminian raves against the doctrine of the Scripture, and all its faithful preachers.

Im. I pray you, cousin, who are these same Arminians? You know I am but little conversant with religious people of any name.

Di. The papists in general, cousin; and all the unconverted, who have any notion at all about redemption through the blood of Christ; Mr. Wesley and his followers; the Baxterians and Neonomians; for none exceed them in en-

* These devils, I perceive, are not very exact in literally copying the expressions; but content themselves with expressing the spirit of preachers and writers. If any reader should think that Discordans does injustice to the Arminians here, he may be satisfied of the contrary by consulting Sellon against Coles.—*Fletcher's Defence of Wesley's Minutes.*

mity against the purity of doctrine. Thus you may see that the Arminian party is by far the most numerous and most honourable among men, and therefore gains proselytes from all quarters. Though, by the way, it is a pretty strong proof that it is the doctrine of antichrist, seeing Immanuel and his doctrines are everywhere spoken against by men of philosophy and natural religion.

In. You know, cousin Discordans, that we have found out many ways of opposing the pure Gospel, and this is one among the rest; under our influence, the grace-abusing libertine censures the true Christian as legal, because he strenuously pleads for purity of heart and regularity of conversation. On the other hand, the real legalist, whether he be Socinian or Arminian, alleges, that the evangelical Christian is an antinomian, because he utterly disclaims the merit of good works in the business of salvation. Indeed, on all hands, those who choose either of the extremes, never fail to censure such as adhere to the middle path of judgment; which you know is the only path of safety.

Fa. Your observation, brother, fulfils what is written in Immanuel's own word, concerning these same Nazarenes: "As for this sect it is everywhere spoken against:" however the enemies of true religion differ among themselves, they agree in stigmatizing the real Christian. Belarmine, Pucksius, Huberus, Hemengius, &c., holy fathers of the Romish church, heartily belaboured them in their days; Dr. Whitby, John Goodwin, Whiston, &c., of the English church, have carried on the dispute with equal warmth, and improved the same chain of arguments against them in latter days; in the present time Dr. Harwood of Bristol, Mr. Wesley of London, Mr. Sellon of Derbyshire, and Dr. Nowel of Oxford, have managed the popish cause with amazing address, and all the while pass for true protestants. So that everywhere, that Gospel which is suited only to the perishing sinner, is spoken against as pernicious and subversive of holiness.

Di. Our friends, the men of this world, always view the sect of the Nazarenes in my glasses, and as they look on them, they say, "What a despicable tribe is this! A set of mean, beggarly people, the off-scourings of the earth, and the very dregs of humanity! Not a person of any considerable rank among them. Led by the nose by a set of illi-

terate dogmatical fishermen. What person possessed of any sense of honour, would frequent their assemblies, or have any connexion with their societies?"

In. Your remarks are very just, my worthy cousin; for mankind in general have forgotten that the Scripture says, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty." So that the very objections raised against them, prove the Nazarenes to be the people whom Immanuel hath redeemed out of the world.

Di. True, sir, but they see not the mistake. But to proceed: my instruments farther represent them as a set of hollow-hearted hypocrites, whom our people thus deride: "What painted deceivers are these, who make such a stir about religion, and affect such an air of sanctity! Hear how they sigh and whine, whilst that rogue of a fanatic tells them his cant story about I know not what. The Scripture says, 'Be not righteous over much; seek not to be over wise.' And I dare say that we have as much religion as they, though we do not make such a stir about it. I'll warrant me these hypocrites are more wicked in private than we are in public; for although they will not get drunk, curse, and swear, as we do, they will cheat and lie like the devil himself."

Fa. A demonstrative proof of the perfection of our conquest over them; for mankind in general do not only hate godliness itself, but even its appearance. And for this reason true sanctity, devotion, and self-denial, are commonly censured as hypocrisy.

Di. As our good friends of the world are not as yet perfectly agreed in their manner of aspersing good people, it happens that different people pursue different methods equally absurd and diabolical. Some, for instance, are pleased to say, "These people are melancholy. See how they hang down their heads like bulrushes as they pass along the streets. One shall never see them look pleasant, nor hear them sing a merry song, as others occasionally do with innocence: I hate that religion which makes people melancholy."

In. People greatly betray their own ignorance, when they assign the cause of melancholy to the religion of Jesus;

the end of which is to revive and comfort the melancholy sinner, whose heart is oppressed with a sense of guilt and defilement; to revive the spirit of the contrite, to bind up the broken-hearted, and to make the lame leap for joy because they obtain the prey. Nor do those revilers of religion consider that they themselves, by their contempt of Christianity, do all they can to excite the grief of the sincere Christian, who cannot see his fellow-sinners walking jocosely in the paths of perdition, without dropping over them a tear of commiseration.

Di. No, they never think of the real cause, but with a disdainful sneer continue to say, "See how they melt in sorrow; hark how they sigh and groan, whilst their artful parson tells them a horrible story about death and judgment, heaven and hell, salvation and damnation, with I know not what. They are driven out of their senses with such terrible doctrine. Who would thus subject his conscience to the pedantry of these enthusiastic bigots, their uncharitable parsons?"

Fa. The fashionable part of the world hate to think of death or judgment, because the very thought would deprive their beloved pleasures of all their imaginary sweetness.

Di. That is just the case, sir; for another of my friends says of the above people, "These ways which their parsons teach them are enough to drive a man out of his senses. What man of spirit could endure restraint from all manner of pleasure? According to them, one must not so much as play at cards, spend a cheerful evening at the tavern, nor so much as to take a Sunday's airing. Playhouses, balls, and assemblies, must all be laid aside. And pray how is our time to be spent? Read the Bible, truly, the most tiresome of books; pray the one-half of their time, and, for aught I know, hear sermons the other half of it. What person of any taste could bear to be bound to the observance of such measures? Let them read the Bible who will, give me a good play or novel. I'll have none of their religion, not I."

In. It is true, plays and novels are light reading, and well suited to the taste of people abandoned to dissipation. Nevertheless, even people of fashion may, if they please, reflect, that reading the Scriptures, praying, and hearing sermons, are subjects unfit for their ridicule; though, by the way, I do all I can to promote their religion.

FA. And as for me, I hold it good we visit our respective divisions, to see that the works of darkness be not neglected; and that we meet here at the usual time.

DIALOGUE XV.

PRIVY to their appointment, I watched in my solitary retreat, impatient for the return of the black fraternity, whom I always found extremely punctual among themselves, and observant of every appointment, unless some very urgent business demanded their presence elsewhere. At the hour appointed they arrived at the place of rendezvous; and having seated themselves on their respective thrones, the conversation was opened by

FASTOSUS. I have been thinking of the stupidity and ignorance of mankind, exhibited in our last interview; and cannot but wonder, however dark and blind, they do not see that the very people whom they censure as enemies to holiness, because they oppose salvation by works, are the same identical persons who are said to be melancholy with being righteous over much. Reason, even unassisted, might easily discover the palpable absurdity, and for the future avoid a contradiction so glaring. I would have my slaves consistent with themselves, seeing I have given them the name of rationalists. But error will always be inconsistent. However, Discordans, we will leave the blind sons of infidelity to hug themselves in their fancied rationality, and attend to the remainder of your story.

DI. My sire, I am all obedience to him who alone could give me being; and to resume the thread of my story would observe, that, strange as it may seem, I do, by the help of these amazing glasses, make one evangelical minister quarrel with another, and that merely because they do not understand each other's manner of expression. One man, for instance, will have it that Immanuel obtained his personality by eternal generation; another will have it to be by divine filiation; and another still is content to believe him to be the only begotten of the Father, without attempting to explain how, or in what sense, he is begotten or filiated. All of those three are firm in the belief of Immanuel's sonship, his Deity, and mediatorial capacity, as well as every doctrine of faith. And yet, strange as it

may seem, those very men shall be so prejudiced against one another, that they cannot comfortably have fellowship together; but may even prove injurious to each other's usefulness; and it may perhaps be very difficult to determine which of the three discovers most of a Gospel spirit. Every one is in the right, and infallibly assured that the other two ought to come in to his opinion.

It is the very same with respect to diversity of gifts. One is led in a peculiar manner into the doctrines of faith, well able to state, define, and defend them against opposition. Another is widely led about in the wilderness of temptation and affliction, by which he obtains peculiar talents in comforting the distressed, and pouring oil into the bleeding wounds of broken hearts. And a third is kept on the mount of enjoyment; his heart is kept warm by a sense of interest, by which enjoyment he is active and lively in the work, a zealous promoter of practical godliness. All of which gifts seem to be essentially necessary to a Gospel ministry, and are all by the same Spirit. And yet, would you think it, these very men shall treat one another as unsound in the faith in one sense or other! The first is deemed a dead, dull, and useless preacher, whilst at the same time he is effectually stopping the mouths of gainsayers. The second, it is feared, loves to be peculiar, and verges a little towards antinomianism, notwithstanding many a feeble knee is strengthened by his ministry. And the third is a rambling inconsistent preacher, notwithstanding by his instrumentality many are brought to a sense of their sin and danger.

These quarrels are of great use to our government, as they fail not to reproach Christianity, stumble the weak believer, and grieve all good men. But this is not all. You know that two men may have the selfsame sentiments in religion; and yet one shall choose to express himself in this manner, and another in that; which difference of expression only may be attended with very serious consequences, if candour is not present on the occasion. This was the case with Trebonius and Theodorus. Theodorus hearing Trebonius preach on a particular occasion, found himself offended with some of his expressions, and thought it his duty to make the preacher acquainted with it as soon as possible. But as Trebonius has too good an opi-

nion of his own attainments, easily to detract a saying, he vindicated not only the doctrine, but the mode of expression. Theodorus was now more than ever persuaded that Trebonius was unsound in the faith, and was not satisfied with verbally defending the truths of the Gospel, *i. e.* his own sentiments, but commenced a paper war with Trebonius. His apology for this step was indeed artful, for he lugged both Christ and religion into partnership with him; and under their authority, or pretended authority, he did what he could to impeach the orthodoxy, and mar the usefulness of Trebonius.

When Trebonius read the performance, he found himself aggrieved; and something within him being deeply wounded, he resolved on retaliation. To work he goes: first establishes his personal orthodoxy, which he also called the Gospel of Christ; then vindicated his own proceedings, which by a happy turn of thought he also linked with the honour of religion. Though the truth is, neither the Gospel of Christ nor the honour of religion had any concern at all in the squabble. However, having first set himself and his doctrine in a respectable point of view, he proceeded diligently to search out and expose every blemish in the performance; and in the end did as much for his brother as he before had done for him. Thus those two champions for the Gospel, that is, for their own honour, went on exposing to the public all they were acquainted with of each other's weaknesses and folly; never once suspecting that by so doing each was exposing his own want of wisdom, and a true Christian spirit. Meanwhile the friends of both were exceedingly concerned, and in vain studied a reconciliation between them. But O what pleasure did it afford our society! And how did Ambitiosus and me, and other jocular devils, laugh at their folly and childishness! From sources of no greater importance than this, I assure you, most of the quarrels amongst professors arise. But when the contention is once begun, it is hard to say where it will end. By these means we get the affections of Christians divided one from another, and instead of being mutual helpers of each other as the Almighty designed them, we make them mutual hindrances and burdens; so that though we cannot indeed destroy them as we would, we disturb and distract them to an amazing degree.

Fa. My son, you would have had comparatively little advantage over these same people, but for my invention of school-divinity. That is the great engine of the devil, Discordans. But for school-divinity, you might even have retired to hell, or contented yourself with doing business among the laity, or in the unconverted world; for if the professors of religion were content with what is written in the Scripture, and chose as much as possible to express themselves in Bible language, there would be such a likeness in expression as well as sentiment, that very probably you would find little to do amongst them.

In. I doubt it not, sir. Notwithstanding, I must assure you, my kingdom has suffered greatly by controversy. For nothing has a more direct tendency to inform the mind than well managed controversy. But when it springs from blind prejudice, and is carried on in a party spirit, it has a wonderful tendency to strengthen my interest; especially if the contending parties mutually agree to expose each other as much as possible, as in the late squabble between Parson Horne and Alderman Wilkes; and which is for the most part the practice of polemic divines. Those two important gentlemen, the parson and patriot, gave as much pleasure to the court party, by flinging rogue and atheist at each other with so much patriotic zeal, as some divines in their polemic writings have given the devil by throwing heretic, Arminian, Calvinist, antinomian, &c. in each other's faces. Few divines can dispute without calling names.

Di. I have before now stirred up a spirit of jealousy between a minister and his people, and between one minister and another, in a manner inexpressibly masterly. For example, about a century ago, the accurate Camillus preached an excellent sermon at Potheina, which was heard by several of the people to whom Junius was pastor; and they being greatly affected with the seasonableness of the subject, and the practical manner in which it was handled, invited Camillus to visit them, and preach in Junius's pulpit, not doubting but it would be altogether agreeable to their beloved pastor. Full of the sermon when they came home, they could not help making Junius partaker of their pleasure. They expatiated largely upon the excellency of his method, the fertility of his illustration, and the propriety

of his application; all of which they did not doubt but Junius would admire as much as themselves. But this was not precisely the case. Junius could not help being sensibly affected with what he had heard; but prudence forbade him to deny Camillus his pulpit.

When retired, and reflecting on what had passed, he strongly suspected that his own honour was injured, by his people's high encomiums on Camillus's sermon. "My people (said he) allege they never heard such an excellent sermon as that which Camillus preached. 'Tis something strange, that this one sermon should affect them more than all my seven years' preaching among them. I never heard them say half so much about any sermon of mine. It shews a great want of affection and respect to me as their own minister I conceive; and they shall hear of it at a time convenient."

Fa. With Junius's leave, I think he discovers a love of praise, which is by no means the offspring of a humble spirit. He would rather be flattered, than his people should be silent in his commendation. But the judicious seldom think it prudent to say much in praise of any person to his face, how well soever they may be affected towards him; and that for two very good reasons. 1. Such commendation has not a little of the appearance of flattery, however sincere it may be in the party who bestows it. 2. There are but few who are able to bear much commendation, without sustaining damage by it. A man must be led deeply into an acquaintance with his own nothingness and insufficiency, before he can bear to be praised and caressed.*

In. That is true, brother; and yet people may err even on that hand, and be cautious overmuch; for, fear of puffing him up by unseasonable commendation, may depress the spirit of their minister, by withholding from him that countenance and encouragement which his spirit and circumstances require.

People are in all things given to extremes; and either

* It is a very common thing in Gospel churches, that if they have a member of more usefulness than others, they exalt and extol him above his measure; so that he becomes elated with self-conceit, and in the issue, when he cannot carry every point his own way, he turns against his former caressers, and becomes the scourge of the community. In this the righteous judgment of God is manifest, who will have all men to appear in their native nothingness and emptiness, unworthy of the trust and dependence of one another.

a minister is caressed and almost adored as an unparalleled person, or he has little or no notice taken of him. I remember a remarkable instance of this in the last century. There was an independent church, who having a minister of a lively address and sound doctrine, one who bid fair for great usefulness among them; yet a lineal descendant of the great Diotrephes, who loved to have the pre-eminence; and one who chose to direct them in all the concerns of life, in their families, in their business, as well as in the church. To his government they yielded themselves implicitly, and almost adored the ground upon which he trod. With caresses and favours they loaded him, till they had raised him to the very height of self-sufficiency and importance; from which they themselves at last assisted to cast him down; and the contempt they poured upon him, pretty nearly equalled their former caresses. After him they had another, of an almost contrary disposition. He had but a very mean opinion of his own abilities, either for preaching or governing. He had such constant acquaintance with the power of his own corruptions, that he was commonly low and depressed in spirit. He never assumed any superiority over even the meanest member, firmly believing himself to be the vilest and most unworthy sinner of the whole community; he stood in need of all encouragement possible, in order to hearten him for his work. Yet the same people who had destroyed the former with unseasonable kindness, suffered the latter to drag on heavily all his days, that from them he seldom or never heard of his word having been made useful. And I suppose must have sunk under his discouragement, if strangers who afterwards came into the church had not been more free with him in discovering some degree of affectionate regard. Different spirits will require different usage, in order to preserve their usefulness: what was death to the former of those ministers, would have been life and vigour to the latter; and what so exceedingly weakened the hands of the latter, would in all probability have been the preservation of the former. But we forget parson Junius, cousin.

Di. Sir, Junius would have his own humour; and accordingly, when the time came that Camillus made his visit, any person attentive to Junius's behaviour might easily find that his friend's room would, to him, have been more agree-

able than his company; notwithstanding, for decency's sake, he forced himself to carry it to him with some degree of seeming civility: I say seeming, for even Christian people have not as yet learned to be exactly on all occasions what they seem. But Camillus is a sagacious man, and soon perceived Junius's coldness through all his former civility and seeming deference. He began to question with himself from whence this coldness might have proceeded? In what he might have given offence? But never dreams that jealousy is at the bottom. Is he not offended with my doctrine? said he to himself. What can be the meaning of this distant carriage of his? What have I done or said that might give him umbrage? So Camillus reasoned, but hit not upon the real cause. And as Camillus is somewhat fond of his own sentiments, though a man inferior to few who are accounted good and religious, he could not help being in doubt about the orthodoxy of his friend. By these means, happily invented by me, this well-designed visit, instead of answering the valuable ends of promoting religious friendship, rather tended, by my intervention, to alienate their affections from each other.

Junius would still have his own humour; and from that day forward discovered a shyness to those who seemed most delighted with Camillus; and when occasion offered, he did not spare bestowing on them what is called a dry rub.

This was not all, for Junius could not leave his prejudice behind him when he went to the pulpit, where he adapted his discourses accordingly. On the other hand, his people could easily see he was not in his usual spirit; and they concluded, that they had given him no just cause of offence.

Meanwhile both parties mutually watched each other's words and deportment. If Junius happened to speak any thing harsh, either from the pulpit or in common conversation, it was said to proceed from a bad spirit. On the other hand, if any of them happened to object to any thing spoken by him, he immediately concluded, either that his people were prejudiced against him, or did not love sound doctrine; for he had not a doubt of the soundness and truth of his own doctrine. And so they went on, till in the issue there was a final separation. Behold, gentlemen, how great a fire a little spark of my nature kindleth. Every

well-wisher to the Belzebubian government must acknowledge, that the devil Discordans merits great applause.

Fa. I speak for the rest, my son, and own that your usefulness is of great extent. I persuade myself your royal grandfather will well reward you, by giving you eternal duration among the people of the nether regions; for certainly your achievements merit the greatest esteem. Why, my son, you make the Nazarenes weak as other men?

Di. After all, I assure you, at certain times I have hard work of it. I mean when Mr. Submission, my avowed enemy, and I happen to meet. This Submission is one of Immanuel's own children, a very great peace-maker, therefore his business is directly opposite to mine; and although I hate him, I must say he is one of the meekest persons upon earth. Never is he known to quarrel with any person, except myself. And I confess, that in every scuffle with him hitherto, I have had the worst of it; but I thank my stars, it is very seldom that I meet with him. When we do meet, meek as he is, I am quite nonplused, and am obliged either to flee, which I abhor, or to fall before him, which is yet a greater mortification to a spirit so noble as I am.

In. So then, cousin, I perceive, you are as ill put to it when you meet with Submission, as I am when I encounter his elder brother Fides. Fides is a warrior with whom I have maintained a very long, though not doubtful war; not doubtful, because I am worsted as sure as ever I enter the lists with him. With great facility I can overturn the power of every other heavenly chieftain; but this fellow, this same Fides, is Immanuel's champion, and has performed the most unparalleled achievements: such achievements as never were performed by any hero besides himself. He hath subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword; out of weakness hath made people strong, causing even from fainting to wax valiant in fight, turning to flight the armies of the aliens. He hath given to women their dead children again, sustained others under the most cruel tortures, in such a manner that they would not accept of deliverance; gave a good report of the promised land to those ancient worthies who walked abroad in sheep skins and goats' skins, destitute, afflicted,

and tormented, of whom, notwithstanding they lodged in dens and caves of the earth, the world itself was undeserving.

These are a specimen of his achievements; but great and heroic as he is, he finds that I also am of noble deeds; a spirit not easily rendered inactive, and more difficult still entirely to subdue. Although he has the promise of the most complete victory in the end, I put him to exert his utmost; for when to appearance I am as dead as a pebble, and Fides has the sole pre-eminence in the soul of man, I play reynard with him, feign myself dead in order to escape the vengeance of his arm.

In time he finds out my deceit, for I watch an opportunity when he is in the very height of a paroxysm, and can scarcely breathe. He is exceedingly troubled with fits, which will sometimes hold him for a long time together, and in which you would take him to be wholly dead; then I take the advantage, and rise upon him with all my powers, and beat and bruise him till life begins to return, which is not always of a sudden; but when he feels the weight of my arm, and the smart of the wounds which I inflict on him, his spirit returns to renewed vigour, he unlocks the magazines of grace, and brings forth such implements of war as I am not able to stand against; so that before he is well out of his fit, he is as strong as ever. At other times he is a long while before he is freed from the effects of his fits; weakness, indisposition, and languor hang upon him for many months, at which time he receives no mercy at the hand of Infidelis.

This fellow is of the most amazing constitution; for whereas, on one hand, idleness never fails to throw him into a lethargy, so on the other, hard labour, severe conflicts, and cruel buffetings, never fail to make him strong and vigorous; and what is very remarkable in itself, but very unlucky for me, is, that the more he is beaten and bruised, the stronger he grows; and these fits in which you would take him to be just a-dying, it is said, only tend to make him the more robust and lively; which is the reason that, although I frequently put him to great pain, I am always discomfited in the issue.

However, gentle friends, you must allow, when circumstances are considered, my valour will at least equal, if not

prove superior to that of Fides. He fights under a certain assurance of victory, and knows of a truth that in the end he shall be more than conqueror. I as well know that I shall be discomfited, which would dishearten any besides myself; yet, notwithstanding the discouragement, I give him many a vigorous turn for it ere I desist, and foully trip up his heels oftener than thrice. Even when I have him down, sprawling and gasping for life, I am conscious he will afterwards renew his strength, and give me a most severe drubbing; and that his victorious hand shall in the end put a period to the days of great Infidelis. Yet this noble principle of royal malice prompts me on, and I will not yield a hair's-breadth whilst life endures. Oh the fearful combats I could relate, which I have had with this heavenly champion, this same Fides!

Fa. We shall be glad to hear of them, my brother, at another time; but at present, if agreeable, I should like you to resume the story, part of which we have already had, respecting the progress of your kingdom.

In. You have already heard how agreeable to his holiness my instructions were, as also of the laws by which the whole system of religion was inverted, and how the pious priest had invested himself with the perfections of deity. I knew that the introduction of this new Christianity might be attended with some difficulty, therefore advised his holiness, the father of the world, to deify some others as well as himself; but at the same time, lest his supremacy should be in any wise infringed, to take care that none should be deified till after their death, and that only with an inferior rank of godship. He took my advice, canonized a vast number under the title of saints, and ordained masses to be said to them out of his own newly-composed bible: for the old Bible in use among primitive Christians, having its laws so contrary to those of the pope, was by his authority made null and void, and Rome, once the mistress of the world, became the mother of harlots—once more the seat of paganism. But, for distinction sake, we call the latter Christian-pagans; because they exercise all their villany under the specious show of Christianity.

In order to support the Christian-pantheon worship, slaughter-houses were built, and called holy inquisitions; where every one who was known to deny the supremacy

and infallibility of his holiness the pope, or so much as harbour a suspicion concerning the papal faith, was treated with as little mercy as if he had been in hell. By these means, people were kept in the most dreadful awe; so that if any man happened to be intelligent enough to see through the cheat, he was obliged to keep his mind to himself; well knowing, that one word spoken against the lucrative faith of the priests, would have ensured his certain death by means the most barbarous and cruel. By this amazing subtilty of priestcraft, with the utmost security they carried on their villany under the mask of sanctity for many centuries, and all Europe trembled at the indignation of the priesthood. For by means of my brother's medals and titles of ecclesiastical dignity, together with my blinding influence, the various orders of reverend fathers clave as fast to his holiness as scales to one another on the impenetrable back of Leviathan.

Yet terrible as the priesthood were, they could not totally prevent the light of the Gospel shining less or more in some parts of Christendom, especially in Britain; where Wickliffe and his disciples gave their reverences no small uneasiness; for which they poured vengeance upon his bones forty years after his demise. This same Scripture light, kindled in England by Wickliffe's ministry, spread itself to the continent, where first John Huss and Jerome of Prague galled the sides of popish prelates; for which the very pious council of Constance first recommended them to the care of the devil by excommunication, and then in the name of the God of mercy condemned them to be burned to death for believing the Bible. It is amazing to think with what dexterity they have lugged in the name of the Almighty, to sanctify their murders on all occasions.

About a century after this, a very strict inquiry after truth began, by the instrumentality of John Calvin and Martin Luther, two avowed enemies to popish wickedness. This revival of religion was very alarming to the priests of Rome, and very injurious to my government. His infallible holiness, instigated by the devil Crudelis, voted their immediate destruction by fire and faggot, by poison, assassination, or any way; for there is nothing dreaded by this same vicar of Christ, so much as the spreading of Gospel knowledge.

These measures however I withstood, having from past experience found that coercive measures are by no means the most likely to reduce professors of religion to the obedience of infidelity; and I thought it better to send the devil Discordans to visit them, with instructions to make them quarrel about the forms of religion; this I took to be the most likely method to invalidate the testimony of both, and to baffle and confound their followers. This was done, and they jarred exceedingly about circumstantials; but do what we would, they spake of the doctrines which are absolutely necessary to salvation with perfect uniformity, which greatly frustrated our dark designs; and this fire of reformation, so lately fanned, by degrees spread itself on the continent, and in Great Britain, where it arose in the days of Wickliffe.

The pope and I being loth to give up the government we had always been accustomed to have in these nations, did what we could to stifle the Reformation: but alas! it went on with rapidity in the days of Edward, and might have made greater advances than it has ever yet done, if, luckily for his holiness and me, that prince had not been taken away in early life. Mary being a princess just fitted to our turn, no sooner ascended the throne, than I flew to England, accompanied by the devil Crudelis, resolving at all events to crush with oppression all who rebelled against me and his holiness. To this salutary purpose were transported from the pope's arsenal, abundance of hempen cord, and faggots beyond number, that we might oblige the people to renounce Jesus Christ, and worship his Romish infallibility.

There were in those days two lusty bishops, right reverend tyrants in the devil, Bonner of London, and Gardiner of Winchester, who hearing of our arrival, came equipped in their prelatic robes, to do us greeting and bid us welcome to the British shore. This brace of right reverend prelates we appointed prime inquisitors in matters of faith, and principal agents of our intended cruelty: indeed none that ever sustained the office of priest, ever were more trusty friends to the government of Rome and hell, than were those worthy prelates.

The vigilant devil Crudelis ceased not day or night from persecuting the saints, so that many of the ringleaders of

the sect of the Nazarenes were apprehended, tried, condemned, and tormented to death at a stake; such as archbishop Cranmer, bishop Hooper, bishop Latimer, bishop Ridley, &c. &c. But, as it happened in former persecutions, so it fell out in this. The ashes of burned saints proved such fertilizing manure to the church, that, in defiance both of hell and the pope, the detested Nazarenes became by far more numerous. Wherefore if our friend Mary, of zealous and scarlet memory, had not been summoned hence to receive her reward, the poor devil Crudelis must necessarily have desisted, merely from incessant and unsuccessful fatigue, and the Nazarenes would have obtained rest, solely from our desperation.

But when Immanuel beheld such havoc made of his church, and so many places bathed with sanctified blood, his wrath took the alarm; in his judgment he cut down the zealous queen and her two trusty bishops, and raised queen Betsy to the throne of England. Now the sword of persecution was wrested from the hands of the papists; and the good people of the church of England did for the puritans what the zealous papists had done for them during the reign of queen Mary. This same queen Elizabeth was a great zealot for high church, and a vigorous nurse of episcopacy; but the Brownists and other dissenters felt the full weight of her regal vengeance. I happily prevailed, unexpectedly, with the divines of the established church, to retain the more refined part of the popish system; which those men who were for a thorough reformation both in doctrine and discipline, could not comply with; and for their non-compliance, we taught them that the arm of episcopacy is every whit as heavy as that of popery, when it is exerted for the good of the church. And for my own part I prompted their reverences to coercive measures, being very apprehensive that the Reformation might have been carried on farther than it really was.

Av. And I assure you, I myself was not idle in those days, but played my game into the hand of great Infidelis. I met their lordships the prelates (I shall never forget it) in full convocation, and reasoned with them on the intended reformation, and unto my arguments they lent a willing and attentive ear. "Well, gentlemen (said I), do you intend to come to a thorough reformation then, and reduce Chris-

tianity to its primitive simplicity? Have you considered, gentlemen, that in so doing you must lose your princely revenues and descend to a level with plain Peter, Paul, and Barnabas, which must needs be a very mortifying step to some of you? Recollect, I pray you, how long your present profits and dignities have been enjoyed by your predecessors in your several sees. Long before Christianity was known in Britain, even beyond the ken of history, this nation was divided into the several bishoprics and archbishoprics by you enjoyed. Through all the ages of popery, the same division of the nation into archflaminries and flaminries continued under their present denominations; and will you discover such a degree of mortification, as to give up the profits annexed to your ecclesiastical dignities? That were to shew indeed that protestant bishops have less providence than pagan flamins. Yet, if you are determined to purge your religion from every relict of popery, your profits, gentlemen, must be parted with, your revenues must be enjoyed no more; and how will this be relished by you?" By such sensible and seasonable remonstrances I won greatly upon the minds of their lordships; and in the issue it was resolved, that rather than part with their dignities and revenues, they should submit to many things which have no foundation in Scripture.

Fa. You bring to my mind, cousin Avaro, the reception I met with by the dignitaries of the ancient church, on the distribution of the forementioned medals. I went attired in my robes of state, to deliver one of my archiepiscopalian medals to a certain priest; whom I instantly created "His grace and most reverend." He mumbled over to himself several times; "most reverend, his grace," viewing the medal with the closest attention. "It is—it is (said he), a very soft and agreeable mode of address, 'Most reverend; his grace.'" "Yes, my lord (said I), it is very musical, and what I myself only am capable of composing: a mode of address becoming the dignity of an archbishop. Humble preachers, such as Peter, Paul, Timothy, and Titus, might be very well contented without being their graces and most reverend, for they were not as you are, courtiers clothed in soft raiment. But for a spiritual courtier, for the primate of a province, to prostitute his name to vulgar mouths, would be highly unbecoming, would greatly eclipse the

honours of your elevated station." "But, worthy sir," returned he, "you know this is a very censorious world in which we live, and some people may be wicked enough to suppose that such a title as his grace, does not so well become a man whose breath is in his nostrils, and I may be censured as ambitious." "I hope, my lord (replied I), you will not meditate too much on the gloomy subject of mortality, or that will make your dignity cumbersome indeed. Honours fade, sir, on the prospect of the grave. As to your being censured as proud and ambitious, I hold to the contrary; it will be deemed essential to your high estate; and the use of the Bible being prohibited, the laity will not know but your order is of apostolical institution. Besides, there is my lord duke enjoys the same title of address with your grace; so that instead of being censured as proud and antichristian, all ranks of people will revere you the more for it; especially as it will make you a fit companion for princes. The nobility will consider you as their superior, inasmuch as a spiritual duke is superior to a temporal; so that in the church your seat will be next to the cardinals, and in the senate-house next to the prince himself. The gentry will fawn upon you, spaniel-like, in order to obtain preferment for younger sons; and the vulgar will adore you as a demi-god.

"I would farther advise you, to lay aside preaching to the vulgar race, and apply yourselves wholly to affairs of state; unless called to it, may be once in seven years, to preach to the king and his nobles." "Ay," replied the worthy prelate, "but how shall I dispense with the obligations I am under as a bishop; to meditate on these things, to give myself wholly to the ministry of the word and prayer; yea, to be instant in preaching the word in season and out of season?" "Oh, sir," replied I, "you need to be under no concern about that." "Surely, sir, that is the duty of a bishop," replied he. "Yes, very true," said I; "the duty of bishops such as were in the apostles' day; such bishops as are appointed in the New Testament. But what has that to do with a diocesan bishop, or an archbishop, of whom you yourself are the first? There were none of them, you know, in the apostles' days; none appointed in the word of God. And therefore the laws which bind scriptural bishops to obedience,

can have no manner of power over you as diocesans; much less can a metropolitan, such a bishop as the apostles never thought of, be under any such injunctions. Surely your grace must know that a lord bishop, or a gracious metropolitan, must have enough to do without preaching the Gospel. Yet if these things are not sufficient to remove the scruples of your mind, and you should still have a notion that preaching is a duty incumbent on you, I can put you in a way to satisfy your conscience, without abating any thing of your greatness.

"Pray, sir, be so kind," said he. "May it please your grace," replied I, "it is neither more nor less than to preach by proxy, as people plead their causes in a court of judicature. You know it is the same in effect, whether you preach in person or by proxy, so that your numerous flock have preaching enough.

"Farther, with your grace's leave, I do not think it becoming your own dignity even to say prayers in your own family. How far beneath the character of such a spiritual dignitary, to be down on his knees amidst his servants, worshipping his Maker! Let me advise you, either to lay aside family worship altogether, or have it performed by a chaplain. This will have two very great advantages attending it. 1. It will save your grace a great deal of hard and unpleasant labour. And, 2. It will make your grace's piety to be admired by the vulgar. Methinks I hear one say to another, 'What a good man is my lord the archbishop! for although he is too high for saying prayers himself, or has got so much that he has no need to pray, he gives a good salary to Mr. Honeylip duly to perform the offices of religion in his stead.'"

All this while the good archbishop continued absorbed in thought; and awaking as from a trance, he said, with astonishment glowing in his countenance, "Sir, you amaze me! so pertinent your counsel; so persuasive your address. You have more than half brought me over to your opinion, as my future conduct will testify."

Having succeeded even beyond expectation with his grace the archbishop, I waited immediately on all the diocesans within the pontifical jurisdiction, and took the most likely measures to bring them over to our interest.

1. I persuaded them, as I had done the archbishop be-

fore them, that the worldly grandeur with which I and his holiness had invested them, was certainly too heavy a burden for them to be able to ascend the pulpit stairs above once or twice a year; and that even then it ought not to be to preach to an ordinary congregation.

2. That they might discharge their duty to the souls within their respective dioceses, by providing vicars to watch over them in their stead, in their several parishes or divisions: that they might freely spend their time either at the court of Rome, or at the courts of their several princes, without sustaining loss at home.

Di. Why, sir, according to your account, the readiest way to stop the mouth of a noisy preacher, is to make a bishop of him.

In. The only way in the world, cousin. Had the king of England given a bishopric to the noisy Whitefield, as he was advised to do by a certain nobleman, it is unknown what mischief might have been prevented. A bishopric would have done him more real injury, than if all the bishops in England had written against him. You remember well, how Dr. D—d once threatened our ruin, and promised fair for doing a mischief to our government; till our happy stars fixed him in a prebend's stall, and a r——l chaplainship; since which time he has been quiet enough, and lets people sleep on and take their rest securely.

Fa. Having secured both orders of popish bishops, I took care to establish deans, abbots, monks, friars, vicars, chaunters, prebendaries, canons, minor canons, &c. &c. From thence I proceeded to persuade the higher orders of clergy to encourage plurality of livings, well knowing that if a country vicar could but procure a fat and fruitful benefice, he would even imitate his betters, and preach as little as possible. I have often with great pleasure observed, that if a benefice exceeded two hundred pounds per annum, the poor vicar who enjoys it finds himself very unable to preach, and therefore hires a journeyman, to whom he leaves the bulk of his business. By these means we got curates introduced into the church; a set of gentlemen sold to slavery and inured to poverty, not for want of parts and learning, but for want of what is by far more necessary to preferment—a patron. A journeyman

weaver, watchmaker, or cabinet-maker, can afford a better table than many a gentleman, who lacks nothing but a patron to make him equal to the very first of bishops.

Happily it just answered our desire, and was not long before a sharp conflict between the vicars and curates ensued; as it is not without a vein of drollery, I shall give you a sketch of it. There was a certain vicar, who having obtained a living of 800*l.* a-year, called his curate to him one day, and thus addressed him: "Mr. Curate, I am now in a station which will admit but of little preaching; I must therefore get you to take that part of the service principally upon yourself; I am under the necessity of visiting the neighbouring gentlemen, and assisting them in their polite amusements, as has been the custom of my predecessors for time immemorial; so that little of my time can be devoted to preaching or praying, and less still to study or contemplation." Mr. Curate replied, "Indeed, sir, I am but a poor hireling, whose scanty allowance is no way adequate to labours so extensive. I am resolved, sir, to measure my services by my annual salary." The vicar's benefice being sufficient to raise him above preaching, and the curate's allowance so small that he could not afford to preach much, it so fell out between vicar and curate, that the parishioners could not obtain above twenty minutes' preaching weekly, in return for their tithes, many dues, and offerings. This, you know, was greatly to our advantage.

Another instance of altercation between the vicar and curate, I well remember, which also was decided in our favour. "Hark you, Mr. Curate (said a certain vicar one day to his journeyman) I expect you shall take the care of all the souls within my parish upon yourself, as I have much business of a very different nature on my hands." "I take the care of them, sir! (replied his curateship) what have I to do with them? I shall take no care of them, I assure you." "Well, but Mr. Curate," said the vicar, "I hired you on purpose that you should take the care of them off from me." "Indeed, sir," rejoined the curate, "I will not, I am resolved; do you think that for the scanty allowance of twelve shillings per week, I will put my own soul in the place of your parishioners? No, sir, let him take care of them who is best paid for so

doing." "Then," said the vicar, "let my lord bishop take care of them, for he is better paid than either vicar or curate." By these means the parishioners may go to heaven or hell, as most suits their inclination, provided always the fees are punctually paid.

Im. Well, father, I really think those curates were in the right; for as they receive but journeymen's wages for doing the drudgery of the business, it is unreasonable to desire any more than journeymen's labour from them. If they perform the more servile parts of the office for their scanty allowance, it seems but meet the vicars, who receive the far greatest part of the profits, should take the burden of souls upon themselves. If I am not greatly mistaken, the far greater part of mankind, the vicars and high-priests alone excepted, are of the same opinion with me and the curate. However, that was all in the days of popery; and the church of England hath since been blessed with a great reformation.

In. It has so, Impiator, and been deformed again, almost far enough. Some time after the Reformation, indeed, the Gospel was preached almost everywhere in England, which made me apprehend the most dreadful consequences, and made me exert my utmost influence in order to reduce the clergy to obedience.

This important point was in a great measure carried, by fixing their attention inordinately upon tradition, and kindling relentings in the bosom of many a gownsman towards the old scarlet lady, whose government had been rejected. So that by degrees I drew them to take counsel, as formerly, from the wise Infidelis; one particular instance of which I shall give you, if you think it will not too long detain you from necessary business.

Fa. That is well thought of, brother. Idleness belongs not to our fraternity; I hold it good, therefore, that we adjourn till our usual time of meeting.

DIALOGUE XVI.

Fa. When we parted yesterday, you mentioned some particular instance of the clergy seeking to you for direction, brother; will it please you to relate it to us now?

In. It is only a little confabulation I had with my good

friend, parson Out-and-in. The case was this: I set out one morning for Rome, to remove some scruples which infested the mind of his holiness, the father of the world; but passing by parson Out-and-in's garden, I beheld the reverend gentleman in his morning gown and velvet cap, walking slow and pensive, to all appearance in a dejected manner. Charity bid me stop and relieve the thoughtful divine. At her command I stopped, and called: "So—ho, Mr. Out-and-in; how do you do?" The good gentleman awaking as from a trance, erected his body into a perpendicular posture, pushed up the snout of his cap from over his eyes, and finding it was me who called, instantly replied, "O my good friend, Rationalis! (for that is the name by which I am known by the clergy of all denominations) am I so happy as to meet with you, in this so difficult season? I pray you, most honourable tutor, be pleased to stop and give me your advice."

I went to him, and thus the old Levite began: "Most truly noble and intelligent sir; I and my brethren, the genuine children of learning and science, have long been much grieved at the rapid progress of fanaticism, which now prevails amazingly over the people; so prevalent is it, sir, that fanatical preachers are more followed, more esteemed than we, the votaries of Almighty reason. In these days, sir, there are some, who in a frantic manner decry the noble powers of the human soul, which we esteem to be almost divine; who preach salvation by what they call the righteousness of Christ, contrary to the instructions which we receive from that illumination which thou hast given us. We have long been studying how to suppress this fanaticism, and to promote the more consistent doctrines of salvation by our own works, and the liberty and freedom of our own will to perform perfect righteousness. It is intolerable, sir, to hear men of virtue and piety placed on a level with vile publicans and sinners, who know not the law, and are therefore accursed. Impious in the highest degree, to suppose that the benevolent Deity will not reward our good endeavours to please him, by working out our own salvation, without trusting in the righteousness of another."

"To be sure," said I, "to gentlemen of virtue and goodness, it must be very mortifying to submit to be levelled with

those who work not, but believe in him who justifieth the ungodly. Very trying, indeed, to own one's self to be a hell-deserving sinner, when your own reason bears witness that you deserve the inestimable blessings of everlasting happiness, for your own personal goodness. What man of virtue and moral goodness, what gentleman of a clear head and good heart, like yourself, can bear to be told that harlots and publicans shall enter the kingdom of heaven sooner than you? I wonder not, my worthy sir, that the preaching of salvation by the works of another should be a stone of perpetual stumbling, and a rock of invincible offence to you. And this offence will never be removed, till we can so manage it, that this same book called Scripture, is made to truckle to the more consistent dictates of human reason; by which alone the authenticity of doctrine ought to be attested, independently of any records whatever, either ancient or modern.

"I myself have beheld the preaching of the cross of Christ with a great deal of uneasiness; but for seeing the self-righteous Jews break their bones by stumbling upon it, and the wise philosophic Grecians turning merry-andrews, and laughing at it as foolishness, I should certainly have sunk into despair; because I was unhappy enough to see it prove both the power of God, and the wisdom of God, to those who felt themselves actually in a perishing condition. But my good Mr. Out-and-in, permit me to tell you, that whatever pain I endure on account of a preached Gospel, I can do nothing that will effectually prevent it, without the concurrence of the clergy. By the way, let me not so much as hint any defection of the clergy. No, sir, I thank my auspicious stars, by far the greatest part of them are upon the right side of the question. There are but few, very few, who preach those enthusiastic doctrines, with which the articles, homilies, and rubric are stuffed; very few who concern themselves about what is, or what is not, the doctrine of the Bible.

"But to the matter of your troubles, sir, I apprehend they may be reduced to these two heads only: To suppress the growth of fanaticism on the one hand, and to secure to yourselves the patrimony of the church on the other. "These are all," returned he; "if we can but accomplish these, we desire no more." "Then, sir, if no

more is aimed at, I shall put you in a way by which you may accomplish them.

"Observe me, then, my good friend Mr. Out-and-in: the first thing to be done, is to draw as thick a veil as possible over the personal excellencies, grace, and righteousness of Immanuel; for these, wherever they are preached, have a tendency to eclipse all human glory, and greatly to diminish the profits of the altar; which you know are the principal things that ought to be advanced. The holy trade of priestcraft can never prosper, but in proportion to your departure from the doctrine of the cross. Yet this must be done with caution, lest the eyes of the people should be opened, and the propagation of your rational religion be prevented. The important question then is, How you may retain the character and authority of Christ's ambassadors, whilst at the same time you are labouring to extirpate the doctrine of salvation by his blood from this rational world? as you cannot expect to be so much regarded by the people, if ever you lose your claim to ambassadorship. Of this, therefore, you must be very cautious, and by no means declare yourselves avowed enemies of the Gospel in so many express words.

No, sir, you must find out the most glorious names which can possibly be ascribed to the Son of God, yet such names as do not imply his personal divinity, these would spoil your scheme, and therefore must be rejected. For instance, you must not call him Immanuel; the mighty God; the everlasting Father; God manifested in the flesh; Jesus Christ, yesterday, to-day, and for ever the same; Alpha and Omega, &c. &c. These and such like names must absolutely be laid aside, for they make directly against the rational scheme. On the other hand, you must be equally careful not to speak slightly of his person, name, and authority, by barefacedly calling him but a man like yourselves, as Dr. Priestley has precipitately done; and by so doing betray the cause of rational religion into the hands of the orthodox, to be mangled and tortured after the manner of that wicked Shaver. In short, you must consider, that the people are all rational alike, and therefore a downright denial of the Godhead of Christ may be attended with very serious consequences. Some people are firmly attached to the Athanasian creed, merely

out of deference to the judgment of their ancestors; and others are as firmly attached to the Scriptures, from an inward conviction of their divine propriety; so that, without the greatest care, you may be baffled in your very first attempts to promulgate your rational religion.

"In short, sir, notwithstanding you believe him to be but a man like yourself, or at most but a dignified creature, you must of necessity, for fear of the populace, give him a kind of suffragan deity or deputed godhead, like that of Mars or Mercury in the pagan theology. Your friend Mr. Whiston, a man of deep intelligence, has shewn you what may be done in this way; do you my good Mr. Out-and-in, imitate the same Homer-like minister.* To be more particular, you must never omit, when you speak of him, to use great and swelling words of seeming respect, as if you had the most profound veneration for his person; call him the only Son of the most high God—the first-born, and most exalted of creatures—a being far above men and angels—under God, the great dispenser of all things, both in earth and heaven. Not a syllable of his measuring the seas in the hollow of his hand; of his meting out heaven with the span; of his comprehending the dust of the earth in a measure; weighing the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance; or of his taking up the isles as a very little thing. That is a description of Jesus most adverse to what you would have thought to be rational religion, which considers him as no more than a man like yourselves; it is good therefore that such descriptions should never be quoted. By keeping close to those appellations which are proper to him, only as a man and a mediator, you will veil his real personal dignity; and in time your audience will quite forget all their old orthodox notions concerning the proper deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, which at present are so very offensive to you and your brethren.

2. "When you happen to hear of any man, who is a zealous and diligent preacher of Christ crucified as the only foundation of the sinner's hope, you must look to it that something be speedily done to prevent his success; for such

* *Homer-like minister.*—Homer was a wonderful creator of gods and goddesses and so was Mr Whiston, from his own account of the Trinity, which he makes to consist of one uncreated and two created Gods.

a man is capable of being very injurious to us and our rational religion. His followers will consider you as no better than hirelings, mercenary priests, and enemies to the Gospel of salvation. Therefore you must, but always with the greatest art, attack his character. Stigmatize him with such names of reproach as you think will be most likely to take with the vulgar. However, you must beware of touching his moral character, for that will be like the body of Achilles, invulnerable even to malice itself. His religious character, because less understood by the common people, will be more easily injured, and therefore the most proper object of your attacks.

"You may call him an enthusiast, which is a name understood by very few; therefore the greatest part of the people will consider him as some outlandish monster, and avoid him as they would shun the path of a crocodile. Or you may call him a methodist; this also is a name well calculated to excite popular abhorrence, as you know many would rather choose to be papists than methodists. Or you may call him an anabaptist, or fanatic. In short, you may dress him in what names you think will most effectually stir up the people to bait him, as they would do a bull or a bear from the forest; and so far as your influence goes, you may totally prevent his usefulness; which you know will be a great service done to the devil, and to rational religion.

"But, my good Mr. Out-and-in, take care that you be not too bare-faced in your slanders, as Dr. Priestley has been in his against the orthodox dissenters. His zeal for rational religion is so furious, that it prompted him to rend the disguise, which ought by all means to have concealed his implacable hatred of the orthodox. This however he has thought proper to discover in such a manner, that his word, in a way of slander, will not scarcely be taken by any body, so that even the rationals themselves are ashamed of his rashness. But you, my friend, may avail yourself of his miscarriage, and avoid the rock upon which he foundered under full sail, by considering that amongst the laity there are always to be found a discerning few, whose penetration may be too keen for a flimsy disguise. Now, should your malice be detected, your very reproaches would bring him proselytes, as in the case of Dr. Trapp of crabbed memory, and the late Mr. Whitefield. Therefore let all

your reproaches seem to flow rather from pity than malice. Do not fail to commend something of the good that is in him; this will be an excellent cloak, from under which you may with the greater freedom shoot your arrows of calumny. For example, when his name is mentioned in company, you may say, 'He is a good sort of man, I believe; but I am sorry for him, poor man, he hath imbibed sad enthusiastic principles. The poor, well-meaning man would do good if he could, I believe, but is sadly led away by methodistical notions.' Sir, there are a thousand ways of vending scandal with seeming pity, which some people are are perfect masters of; but your divines are too warm, and therefore their arrows fall to the ground before they inflict any wound at all.

"I have known an important minister, ere now, ruin the reputation of his neighbour with less than ten words speaking, and those too seemingly spoken in much pity. Oh, sir, there requires great art in scandalizing to purpose. Nothing gives such a point to the arrow of scandal, as a seeming concern for the welfare of the party whom you want to ruin. I could recommend you to certain gentlemen in great estimation for religion and virtue, as the most accomplished in this necessary art; did not I know that you disdain to learn from any inferior to myself.

3. "If you would invalidate the doctrine of imputed righteousness, you must begin just here, and proceed in the following manner: That it is a doctrine which must be brought into contempt, as you would wish to preserve the honour of the creature, is clear to a demonstration; seeing, whenever a man is brought cordially to embrace it, his looks, however lofty before, are brought down, and he lies at the feet of Jesus as a perishing and lost sinner; which you know is inconsistent with the dignity of a philosopher, or a rational Christian.

"You must, my worthy Mr. Out-and-in, you must indeed, declare that man having received no damage at all by the fall of Adam, and coming into the world in perfect innocence, is capable of having a righoteusness of his own, which will justify him before an infinitely holy God." "Ay, but, Mr. Rationalis (said he), how shall I manage in this, seeing there are so many plain passages of Scripture which contradict me?" "Do, my good friend? You must not

mind that, if you intend to be a rational preacher. You must shew yourself a man, and leap over them, as many have done before you. Imitate the zealous Dr. Priestley, and, like him, tell your hearers, that the Scriptures do not mean what they say.* What men of reason would regard a few adverse texts of Scripture, when the dignity of human nature is the subject in question?

"For your encouragement, permit me to assure you, that, however adverse the Scriptures may be to your rational doctrine, the populace will be very propitious.

"You can never please men so well as by clapping them on the shoulders, telling them their hearts are good, that they need not doubt of getting safe to heaven, whether they believe in the Son of God or not. And I engage, sir, your auditory will caress you for the sake of your pleasing doctrine.

4. "As to the Holy Ghost, I would not have you absolutely refrain from mentioning him, and his assisting influence, because your people read of him in your church liturgy so very often. But be sure roundly to assert, that it is mere enthusiasm for a man to expect to receive the Holy Ghost in these days; and let them solve the difficulty, how the thoughts of a man's heart can be cleansed by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, whom they cannot receive, as they shall find opportunity." It seems I proved as a kind of remembrancer here, for he stopped me short, and said: —"Let me see——I think I should remember something about the Holy Ghost somewhere—— Hum—if I mistake not, it was relating to the office of ordination."

"Yes, sir (said I), it was; you only professed to my lord bishop that you were moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you the office of a deacon: that was all, sir." He replied, "I believe it was some such thing. But pray, sir, was it rational in me so to do, seeing I did not then believe that any man receives the moving influences of the Holy Ghost in these times?" "Surely (said I), it was. You know, sir, no man can get a benefice without it in your way; and, I pray you, who would not do as much as that for a good living? Why should you have any scruple of conscience, seeing you have got some hundreds a-year by it? I know many, very many, who did the same, sir, who

* "Familiar Illustration of certain Texts," &c.

can hardly procure thirty pounds per annum. On my word you sold your conscience well. But for those sons of science, they foolishly threw theirs away without the prospect of any comfortable return. I assure you, a journeyman weaver can afford a better table than many a clergyman of the rank of curate.

5. "Once more; as the works of the Saviour of mankind must not be wholly omitted; should you be asked, What Jesus did for his people? you must answer, as it were in a rapture: 'Oh! he hath done great things for us. He descended from the heavenly glories, and assumed our nature. He hath abrogated the severity of the old, and introduced a new and milder law; lived agreeable to the precepts of it himself, and when his instructions were finished, he confirmed us in his ways, and sealed the truth of his doctrine with his own precious blood.' Thus, my friend, you may by good management, if grace prevent not, deceive the very elect." Tears of thankfulness trickled down the old gentleman's beard; he gave me most hearty thanks, and protested that no instructions could be more agreeable to the dictates of his own reason.

Fa. I can tell you, brother, your advice was not in vain; but has been invariably followed, so that this rational religion is now very little injurious to our interest.

In. It is very moderate, sir, and may well be tolerated even by our governors themselves. It has not the least affinity with the doctrine of the cross; which is justly the abhorrence of every partisan of ours, as will appear from the creed which I composed, and put into the hands of my friend Mr. Out-and-in; which, if agreeable, I shall recite.

Di. I pray you, sir, let us have the creed. It may afford matter of entertainment to have the creed of the enemies of all creeds and confessions.

In. Not enemies to all creeds, cousin; only to those creeds which they deem orthodox; those which debase the sinner, exalt the Saviour, and thwart the views of human arrogance. But they are very fond of such creeds as tickle proud nature, eclipse the sovereignty of grace, and debase the Saviour, as insufficient of himself to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him: as you will see in the following:

"I believe in the great God, the Father and fountain of Deity, as an absolute and supreme being, eternal, immortal,

invisible, omnipresent, all-powerful, the Creator, Supporter, and Governor of all worlds. I believe in another God, who is not eternal in his existence, not omnipresent in his essence; not omnipotent, but entirely dependent on the great God for his very existence; not supreme over all, as Paul the fanatic thought, but subject in all things to him that made him; not immortal, but actually died about seventeen hundred years ago, for purposes afterwards to be mentioned. I farther believe, concerning this second God, that he was created, as the famous Whiston says, by the great God in an ineffable manner, before the foundation of the world, far above all angels, and appointed to be the minister of the wrath and mercy of the Creator. I believe in a third God, called the Holy Ghost, created by the second God, or suffragan of the supreme Deity, and that therefore he may properly be called the grandson of the great God"——

"I beg your pardon," said Mr. Out-and-in, interrupting me, "it would be more rational still to ascribe no deity whatever to the Son of God."

"O sir," replied I, "we shall fit you in that in the most agreeable manner;" then to the article of faith in the great God, add, "I believe in Jesus Christ as a mere man like ourselves, yet pious and holy. A man sent of God, as a great teacher, whose business in life was to introduce a new mild law, commonly called the Gospel; because God had altered his mind respecting the salvation of mankind, since his giving of the old law, which upon examination and long experience, was found to be too strict and severe, consequently unjust and fit for abolition. Wherefore he raised up this same Jesus Christ, a man like ourselves, and sent him to correct the errors which infinite wisdom had fallen into, in giving what we call the moral law. I believe, that when he obtained a perfect correct copy, he taught it to mankind, and called it the new law, or the Gospel. I believe that this good man actually did make such corrections, alterations, and amendments in the moral law, as he saw meet, notwithstanding he positively declared, that 'although heaven and earth should both pass away, not one jot or tittle of the old law should fail,' *i. e.* be superseded by any other law whatever. I believe that Jesus Christ, this good man like ourselves, having rendered the old law a perfect system, and having taught it in its purified state, died to

confirm the truth of his doctrine, just as Cranmer and other good men have done since then. I believe, farther, that he continued under the power of death for three days, and then was raised from the dead, to shew that he was no impostor, but was actually commissioned to amend the old law, which, prior to his correction, was neither holy, just, nor good, as the mistaken apostle thought it to be. Farther still, I believe that in his exalted state he is, as good Dr. Priestley observes, only a man like ourselves, notwithstanding the orthodox ignorantly worship him as Immanuel, God with them; God manifested in the flesh; the true God and eternal life; the Alpha and Omega; the first and the last: and I know not what enthusiastic titles, such as that book called the Bible ascribes to Jesus of Nazareth.

"Concerning the original state of man, I believe, that Adam did not beget his children in the likeness which he himself bore at the time of their being begotten, but in the likeness which he bore before he had sinned; that although the fountain became polluted, the streams continue pure and limpid; and although the root was depraved by transgression, the branches and fruit are holy and innocent. So that there is no such thing as original sin in any sense; nor have the posterity of Adam any share in the guilt of his transgressions. And whereas the death of infants is frequently alleged by fanatics and orthodox Christians as a proof of original sin; I do most rationally believe concerning those that die in infancy, that either God in an arbitrary unjust manner murders them without cause; or that their death is occasioned by some sin of their own, committed either whilst they were in the womb, or before they had being; for no man can die for the sins of another, says your oracle, and yet it is clear that infants do die.

"Moreover, I believe that every man is possessed of power to justify himself by the deeds of the law, and to procure salvation by his own willing and running, contrary to the opinion of Paul, and the rest of the orthodox; that salvation is obtained by works of righteousness of our own performing, and not by the obedience and death of any other person whatever; that the glory of our salvation shall redound to the absolute mercy of God, and our own good endeavours to obtain it; and not unto Christ, who, the orthodox enthusiastically say, has loved them, and washed

them in his blood, by which he has redeemed them to God out of every nation, kindred, people, tongue, and language."

This creed being cordially received by my votaries, I laughed in my sleeve, and said, A fig for you all, my enemies! Goodwin, Charnock, Owen, and Crisp, &c. &c. where are you now? A fig for all your snarlings at my principles! Lift up your heads from the dusty pillows, and listen whilst your own descendants, ye puritans, with all the force of eloquence, plead the cause of great Infidelis!

Im. Honoured father, I admire your subtilty, and almost adore your craftiness; who would have thought when we heard the old puritans raving against unbelief and profaneness, that in such a short time their descendants would have forsaken the principles of their progenitors? But I give you joy, my sire; your operations have lacked no advantageous success.

In. You are very obliging, my son. But I perceive you are not aware of all the glory of this conquest. Perhaps my friends would think it strange, if I should tell them, that by this device I have again introduced into Britain, as gross idolatry as ever was preached by the ancient Druids, as ever was known at Rome or Athens; and that British divines have arrived at a higher degree of heathenism than ever was known in the celebrated pantheon.

Im. Nay, then, my bewildering parent, out with it, and explain yourself. What, idolatry again in Britain? Happy stars!

In. Hold, son—Restrain yourself, I say.—Do not you remember the charge I gave you, Impiator, when I sent forth my several worthies to sound my sleep-giving trumpet?

Im. I can remember nothing at present, so great is my joy! O idolatry! how glad am I that the Britons have again embraced thee!

In. This, son, was my charge, and I desire you will remember it. Take care, said I; Impiator, take care what you do. It is a matter of great importance to our infernal interest, to which a blunder of yours might on this occasion be very injurious. These men are gone forth upon my business; with commission from me, your father, to counteract a preached Gospel, and as much as may be to sap its foundation doctrines. Now, my son, in order to be useful to me, it is highly necessary they should bear the appear-

ance of the strictest sanctity, and be not anywise defective in tithing, annise, mint, and cummin; or how can they impose the cheat upon mankind with success? Whereas the appearance of devotion and sanctity will give energy to their arguments, and greatly recommend their doctrine; there is no beating it out of the heads, even of the most ignorant, that there is such a thing as devotion and sanctity inseparably connected with religion.

Now, my son, thou art but a purblind devil, and at best precipitate, therefore thou mayest overturn my well-concerted scheme. I charge thee, therefore, Impiator, as thou wishest well to our mal-administration, that thou shalt refrain from tempting these men into any of thine openly notorious ways, and to leave them entirely to my government; for they cannot miscarry whilst I have the pleasure of reigning in their hearts.

Fa. A very necessary caution, and ought to be regarded.

Im. I remember it very well, and have hitherto acted accordingly; notwithstanding I would rather allure every person to take up his dwelling in some part of my dominions. But, sir, I never knew that your rational divines were properly idolators.

In. Do you consider then. They tell their hearers, that Immanuel is no more than a dignified creature, who has no personal claim to the essential properties of true and absolute divinity, notwithstanding many of them pay divine honours to his name. Now, my son, the worship of a creature, how dignified soever, is by all allowed to be mere idolatry.

Fa. They deny the charge of idolatry, brother, by alleging, that they offer to Immanuel only an inferior worship suited to the inferiority of his person as a created being.

In. The very thing in which their idolatry consists, and is on a level with that of the ancient pagans. It was an inferior kind of adoration which the ancients paid to their heroes and common deities, in comparison of that which they offered to Jupiter their great god, the supposed king and father of all the rest. Mars and Mercury, for instance, were never considered as supreme, but as acting under the direction and delegation of Jupiter; as such, and such only they were adored and worshipped; so that to distinguish

between the worship of the Father, as supreme, and that of his Son, as inferior and subordinate, instead of exculpating them from the charge of idolatry, doth actually enforce it.

Fa. But to clear themselves from the charge of idolatry, they allege farther, sir, the command of God himself, for their worshipping the Son, notwithstanding his inferiority. The great God, say they, hath given command that all the angels of God should worship him, and that all men should honour him; shall then our obedience draw upon us the reproach of idolatry?

In. So they say. But if they knew the Scriptures only half as well as you and me, who have laboured all our days to cloud their evidence, they would see that these commands, instead of exculpating them from, do actually bring home the charge of idolatry upon them. God hath expressly commanded, that "Mankind shall have no other gods before him," as objects of religious adoration, either by office or otherwise. And he would hardly have himself introduced another of a different nature, and commanded all men to worship him; seeing, in this case, one command would have clashed with the other. This would have been the spring of wild confusion, and everlasting uncertainty; for the two commands being diametrically opposite, no man could ever have known which of the two might be obeyed with safety.

Would we but suffer them to reflect upon the divine commands, they must unavoidably see, that their worshipping of the Son of God as merely delegated, with an inferior kind of worship, is absolute idolatry. When the first begotten was brought into the world, it was said, "Let all the angels of God worship him;" which they accordingly did at his birth. When he revealed himself to Israel, the Father gave command, that "All men should honour the Son, even as they honoured the Father." That is, with the selfsame honour as is paid to the Father, on the foundation of his being one (in essence) with the Father. Whereas, had the Father ordained divine honours to be paid to any being of a different essence from himself, he would not only have overturned the first commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me;" but have given his glory to another, contrary to his own express declaration. I would

not therefore have those sons of superior reason think it at all strange, if at last they shall find themselves ranked with idolaters.

Im. But, father, if I mistake not, you said, that with them paganism is brought to as great perfection as ever it arrived at in the Roman pantheon. How is that, sir, seeing they are rational Christians?

In. Yes, my son, they call themselves rational Christians, because they believe and teach, "That the world by wisdom may know the Almighty;" and adorn their harangues with words which men's wisdom teacheth; but they are pagans, notwithstanding, as will appear, when you consider that they worship more gods than one. Arians and Socinians both agree to worship one, whom they say is truly and essentially God, and the king and father of the other deities. Besides this object of supreme adoration, they have other two, the Son and the Holy Ghost, whom they honour with inferior adoration, just as the ancients did the common deities. I suppose, gentlemen, you will allow that the worship of two or three objects of different ranks, is as real paganism, as the worship of so many hundreds; but I choose to distinguish the moderns from others, by the name of Christian pagans, because they allow Jesus Christ to be one of their secondary deities. I am greatly obliged to you, my brother Fastosus, for your assistance so kindly given, to enable me to accomplish my purposes; without it I could not have brought my affairs to their present happy situation.

Fa. No, brother, you could not; but you are at all times welcome to my assistance in counteracting the simplicity of Gospel truth. I myself should greatly suffer, were the Arians and Socinians to discover what part we have in their rational religion; and I am not without my fears that the incapacity of the preachers for making proselytes, the dwindling away of their congregations, and the contempt in which they are in general held, will in time convince them, "that the world by wisdom knew not God;" and so bring them to change their present system of rational religion for that of the cross of Jesus, which is truly rational, and ennobles every reasoning power of the human soul.

Im. Ah, my sire, what a subtile spirit are you! With what laudable craftiness must you have acted, to succeed

in introducing pagan idolatry amongst modern divines, even amongst protestant dissenters! I have long known that the papists are pagans in disguise, but had no thought of rational Christians being so far in alliance with us.

Di. Pagans in disguise, cousin! What do you mean? There is no mystery at all in your father's doctrine; nor is there much difference between the ancient pagans and modern papists. The principal difference is this. The popish Juno, whom they call the mother of God, is far greater in power and more exalted in glory, than the wife of Jupiter the pagan deity. The pagan Juno acted in all things subordinate to the will of her husband, the king and father of the gods, who bore absolute sway over the heavenly synod: but the popish Jupiter acts in subordination to the will of his virgin mother. He rules the creation indeed; but then he is still subject to maternal direction; so that it is not God the Saviour of sinners, but the virgin Mary, the popish Juno, who possesses absolute sovereignty; and what good they expect at the hand of God, is expected as to be done in obedience to his virgin mother.

In all other things, there is little or no disparity between the ancient and modern pantheon worship. The pagans worshipped angels, whom they called gods; the papists worship them also, knowing them to be creatures. The first had their heroes and heroines, whom they adored under the name of demi-gods; the latter also have their heroes and heroines, whom they worship under the name of saints. The ancients had their ambiguous oracles and lying wonders, and the moderns have both in far greater abundance; so that he must be blind indeed, who does not see amongst them undisguised paganism.

Im. Then it must follow, that the papists are greater friends to my father Infidelis than the Arians and Socinians, because these bear something of the appearance of truth; but those have cast off both truth and its appearance.

In. That is your wisdom again, my son. Impiator would make but a blundering minister of state in my court, gentlemen. But, my son, you may know it is with us a maxim of policy, that "whoever comes nearest the truth, and is, notwithstanding, destitute of it, is always capable of doing the most essential service to my interest." Popish paganism is by far too barefaced to succeed in England,

where its absurdities have been so long detected. English protestants will not worship a god of the baker's making, whilst their women retain the art of making good plumb-pudding, which will at any time be preferred to the sacramental wafer. But Arian and Socinian paganism is so subtilly invented, and so well refined, that it passeth with many for rational Christianity.

Im. I find, sir, you are under necessity as well as myself to act wisely, with craft and cunning, finding that the same device will not, with all people, at all times succeed alike. We may sometimes, to some people, appear in our own infernal likeness, and at other times we are fain to put on a deep disguise in order to accomplish our designs. But no matter how, so that we have them safe at last. However, gentlemen, there being such a prospect of plenty, I begin to fear there will scarcely be room left in hell for us devils.

In. Another stroke of my son's wit. It is well, Impiator, that your business is to tyrannize only over the thoughtless part of the human race, or you would be but of little service to our fraternity. But have you never heard, that Tophet is wide and large, without either brim or bottom? There is no fear of wanting room. Besides, wherever the fiends may happen to be, they are always at home, being sure to carry their hell along with them.

Fa. I have somewhere seen a map of that part of your dominions, brother, where the idolaters dwell; if you have got one about you, I should be glad to have a description of it.

In. I have, sir; and am glad it is in my power to gratify my much honoured brother.——You see, sir, it is divided into two grand provinces, each inhabited by different sects of idol-worshippers. That province on the left contains the various sects of civil idolaters, and this on the right contains the many denominations of their elder brethren, the religious idolaters. And I assure, they are two bodies of people very respectable.

The province which contains the civil idolaters is divided into several counties, all of which are very populous. In the first county live the worshippers of vain pleasure, and this county is divided into several regalities, in which the several sects or denominations of idolaters dwell, according to the diversity of their inclinations. The first regality is

appointed to the worshippers of living creatures. This swarms with jockies and gamblers of the turf, both of noble and ignoble extraction. Along with them live the worshippers of foxes, hares, and hounds; a very jolly race, I assure you; well skilled in the literature of the kennel. But it is better to be a slave in a Turkish galley, than held as a divinity in this regality, for adoration never fails to procure torture to the idol; as the panting of the hare, and the well-ploughed sides of the horse, sufficiently demonstrate. A little nook of this regality is by royal mandate made over to sterile wives and maiden ladies, who, for want of more agreeable objects of adoration, worship monkies, parrots, and lap-dogs. The second regality is the habitation of those who worship the dramatic poets, and their apes the players. At the shrines of these idols the worshippers sacrifice health and virtue, under pretence of learning wisdom. They are a very fashionable and honoured people, with whom legislators and guardians of public virtue are not ashamed to associate. Here you may find legislators patriotically sacrificing their own virtue, in order to protect that of the nation; their own estates, in order to assist in public economy; and faithlessly wasting their own time, in order to teach industry to the inferior ranks of subjects.

In the second county you will find all the worshippers of false honour; a set of gentry extremely divided in their sentiments relative to the object of their adoration. One holy father falls down prostrate, like Cardinal Wolsey, before the triple crown and pontifical dignity. A second is equally devout at the shrine of a cardinal's hat; and a third, less aspiring, pays his devotions to a bishop's mitre or prelatic robes, and the highest of his present ambition is a bishopric. Other reverend gentlemen offer a more humble worship to a deanery, prebend, or vicarage.

It is very observable, that in this county people never worship that to which they have already attained; but, having compassed their purpose, burn incense to the idol next in rank; and thus the worshipper goes on, if death and disappointment do not prevent him, till he has worshipped every shrine in the pantheon.

For instance, whilst a curate, a vicarage is the idol; the vicarage obtained, it gives place to a prebend or deanery; which once enjoyed, they also in their turn give place to a

bishopric: that, to an archbishopric; which is the principal idol of the English. But in other countries there are idols of superior rank, so that the moment an archbishopric is obtained, incense smokes to a cardinal's hat; which also obtained, loses its worshipper, who is now converted to the worship of the triple crown, the great god and father of all the other idols.

Nor are the laity less devout than their reverend brethren; for one man worships universal empire, like Lewis of France and some others; but it is said that George of Britain is an apostate from this religion. Another worships a crown and sceptre, like the descendant of a certain bricklayer; and many adore the place of prime minister, chancellor of the kingdom, first lord of the treasury, with every other place of honour and trust in government. Some you shall see fall prostrate before a star and garter, whilst others are all obedience to a coronet. The husband lies in the dust before "his honour," whilst his wife in raptures adores "her ladyship." His lordship is bended to by one, and another pays all his devotion to his grace.

In this county you may find some men religious enough to worship a corporal's knot, or a serjeant's halberd. Some worship an ensign's sash, others a lieutenant's commission; whilst the captain is absolutely as much devoted to a regiment, as his colonel is to a marshal's staff.

The third county is the dwelling of those who worship their own bodies; than which, I presume, there is not a more ravenous idol in the synod. Around the shrine of this god stand the baker, brewer, pastry-cook, confectioner, distiller, weaver, and male and female tailors. Hard by is a constellation of the softer sex prostrate before an Indian shrub, the leaves of which are in great veneration. At no great distance is a cloud of worshippers of Virginia tobacco; they are divided into no less than four different sects. The first of whom worship the tobacco in the neat leaf cut small, or well rolled together. The second worship it after it is well ground into flour. The third put it through the fire to the dear sensation. And the fourth are of such a catholic disposition, that they worship the dearly beloved tobacco in all its forms. Of this sect the LISTENER professes himself.

The belly is worshipped by many as the principal god;

and so profuse are they in their offerings, that its altar is sometimes almost overturned, and the idol, greedy as it is, is unable to bear the fruits of their devotion. The sect of gluttons, a very devout race, ransack both earth and sea to bring plenty of offerings to the idol; and that of drunkards, in no less devotion, pour on the wines in such profusion, that all the surrounding trenches are gorged to the brim. This same idol differs exceedingly from most other objects of idolatrous worship; for when it has swelled to excess in the drink offering, it invites the brain to share in the feast, to which it presents every vapourish effluvia, whilst it reserves for its own use only the parts excrementitious. Moreover, this same belly is apt to resent the profusion of its worshippers, and sends forth the bluest plagues, most chilling agues, burning, putrid, and malignant fevers, with all manner of acute and chronical distempers amongst the worshippers, and thus provides employment for gentlemen of the faculty; whose business positively would be worse than that of a cobler, but for the religion of belly worshipping.

In the fourth county dwell the worshippers of gold and large possessions, some of whom you shall find lying prostrate in the deepest devotion to a fine well-situated house and garden; others worshipping a fertile estate and well-stored barns, a flock of fleecy sheep, or a herd of fattening bullocks. One man adores the brace of nags which hurl him from place to place, whilst his friend is prostrate before a splendid retinue. Moidores, as well as English coin, are a splendid idol, and attract the attention of many; whilst some adore a coalpit, or a mine of leaden ore.

Had I time, I would give you a more full account of the religious idolaters; but as business is urgent, I shall only touch upon some of their gods. The greatest of which is his holiness the present pope, who dispenseth blessing and cursing, casteth down and exalteth, at his pleasure. This god, who is exalted above all that is called God, issueth dispensations and pardons for money and price, contrary to the manner of the God of heaven. The one pardons and gives salvation freely of grace, but the other sells his pardons as dear as he can. Next to his holiness, on the right hand, stands the popish Juno, or virgin Mary, whose powerful command of the God of nature is greatly adored

by every zealous papist. On the left hand stands a Jesus Christ of wood, whom the papists also highly revere; for they are almost to distraction fond of wooden deities. Some indeed have a Jesus Christ made of gold or silver, and others, more lowly, worship a paper Saviour; but the most humble devotion is paid to the gods which the baker makes. These are the most ravenous idolaters in the whole world; for with the greatest eagerness and devout veneration they eat the object of their adoration. Thousands of these breaden gods are devoured annually, and as soon as devoured, they are replaced by others from the sacred ovens. The people, worship, and service of the true Jesus of Nazareth they abhor, and persecute with as much fury as ever their ancestors the Romish pagans did. But if their own goldsmiths, carvers, or statuaries happen to produce a handsome Jesus Christ, or a mother of God, the country will presently wonder after it in the most profound adoration.

Fa. I have sometimes thought, brother, that the popish religion is the religion of Moloch inverted. That voracious idol was used to devour the children of his worshippers; but here the greedy worshippers devour their god after he is well baked in the oven.

In. The ancient pagans were even foolish enough, in giving their children to that greedy devil, Moloch; and the papists are not much wiser in worshipping the works of the artificer, or believing that they can eat their Maker. Here are likewise the greatest variety of venerable relics, such as St. Peter's beard, the ear of St. Francis, the milk of the virgin, with a thousand fooleries besides, all of which are in some sense deified.

Besides these already mentioned, there dwell in this province all who worship their ancestors, which renders the county very populous. I mean those who hold the canons, confessions, and liturgies composed by their ancestors, to be nearly equal to the Scriptures in authenticity. Likewise those who are of this or that persuasion, merely because it was the faith of their progenitors, without giving themselves the trouble of searching the Scriptures to know the truth of the doctrine. It is also here that the worshippers of the sacerdotal livery dwell. I mean those who venerate a man merely for the sake of his gown and cas-

sock, without inquiring whether his doctrine and conversation render him venerable.

But I should tire your patience, was I to give you a minute description of my vastly extended country, as well as lead you to imitate the sloth of the children of men. I shall therefore beg leave here to desist. At the usual time I will meet you; business calls me hence at present.

DIALOGUE XVII.

Privy to their appointment, I made business give way to curiosity, and I was as punctual in my attendance as they were in theirs. At the time before agreed to, they assembled, resumed their seats, and Fastosus thus began:

Fa. It is true, sir, your son Avaro hath greatly exceeded my expectations, and proves himself to be an expert devil; he will, I think, do honour to the name of Infidelis, and may greatly contribute to the flourishing estate of the kingdom of pride. I should be glad if Avaro might now a little enlarge upon the hints he has already given, that we may farther see the prosperity of our general interest.

Di. That will be very grateful to me, cousin Avaro, as your sordid and griping influences have the most happy effect upon the reign of contention. How have I been delighted when one of your slaves has dropped into the grave, leaving behind him vast possessions, by the discord I have sown amongst his children and kinsfolks! Your slaves dare not think of dying and entering into another world; therefore it sometimes happens, that after the muckworm has been by every means, and every kind of rapine, scraping wealth together for many years, he drops into eternity without leaving behind him any authentic direction how his plunder is to be disposed of. This gives me a fair opportunity of setting his relations together by the ears, about who shall get most of the miser's effects to himself; and I have the happiness frequently of planting irreconcilable enmity in the heart of one brother and sister against another, which you know is a comfortable sight to our infernal nobility.

Sometimes the griping miser, that enemy to himself and all mankind, is over persuaded to make his will, though

secretly hoping he shall not die for a great while yet to come; and then the case is very little altered: for when the wretch goes to the place appointed for the covetous, his will is very unsatisfactory to some of his relations; one has too much, and the other has too little left him. Here disagreeable altercation succeeds the funeral obsequies, and division and everlasting disgust sum up the whole. Unless, indeed, that relation who has too little bequeathed to him, should call in the gentlemen of the law to decide the matter in some court of judicature, and who, having fleeced both the fools as handsomely as the nature of the thing would admit of, refer them at last to an arbitration.

I assure you, cousin, I scarcely ever see one of your industrious slaves, but I flatter a hope of having some employment in his family on his demise; nor do I know any other real use that the miser's ill-gotten money is of to society, besides sowing discord amongst friends and relations. The wretch meanly robs his own back and belly, as well as all he deals with, to answer purposes no more valuable by his having. But I prevent you, cousin.

Av. I cannot easily depart from the tent of the scarlet lady, whose name is mystic Babylon, without making farther honourable mention of her prudent children. The wise disposal of purgatorial fire has been already exemplified, and the dispensation and pardon market has been glanced at; but one way of getting money besides these I shall now instance. I have laid my claim to the popish clergy in general, but of them all, there are none who exceed the worthy lords the inquisitors in veneration of my golden image. This religion of the golden image was first invented by the clergy of Babylon, and I assure you to this day the clergy of Babylon invariably follow it. But the inquisitors, of all others, are the most zealous devotees of this golden god, first set up by the parsons of Babylon.

Never did an eagle look out for a dove, nor a hawk for a sparrow, with greater vigilance than their lordships are wont to look out for a prey. If within their jurisdiction there happens to be a stranger whose circumstances are prosperous, and who is likely to be a good bone for their reverences to pick; it shall go hard, but they will provoke

him by some of their emissaries, to say something against the inquisitive tribunal, which in some countries is deemed the unpardonable sin. No sooner has the insinuating priest by indirect means, obtained matter of accusation, but he makes information in the holy office before the fathers, who, on hearing the blessed report, are as much delighted as the wolf when he has fanged a prey. The merchant is apprehended, his estate confiscated; he is immured in the prison cells till consumed either by famine or vermin, otherwise he is tortured privately to death by the hands of their sanctified ruffians.

One instance of the many which I might produce, shall serve to exemplify the equity of the inquisitors. When Syracuse was in its glory, there was one Bellarius, a foreign merchant, who in the course of business had amassed great riches; and who at the same time was so circumspect in all his ways, that even the eye of an emissary of the office could find nothing, of which to accuse him to the tribunal. Thus he lived in reputation and affluence for many years, to the great impatience of the holy inquisitors, who could find no plausible pretence by which they might fang his substance with their rapacious talons.

Bellarius had an only child, a lady about seventeen. Her person was the perfection of symmetry, and her mind a copy of the purest virtue. By her they found means to accomplish their purposes, and bring complicated ruin on the unhappy parent. The family retired to peaceful repose, when one night alarmed, first by the approach of a coach, and then by a smart rapping at the gate, Bellarius from within asked, "Who is there?" he was answered, "the holy Inquisition." Down stairs he run, flew to the gates in obedience to the dread tribunal, and opened to receive those ministers of darkness. Understanding they were come for his daughter, in farther obedience to those leaders of the church, he went himself up to her chamber, brought her down trembling as she was, and delivered her into the hands of the horrid ravishers, who carried her off to the seraglio in the office of Inquisition. Where for the present we leave her, through fear of death seduced from her virtue by those pretended patrons of religion, and return to the unhappy, disconsolate father.

Im. Well, brother, I find then the priests of Rome are

not so much addicted to eunuchry as they pretend. It is lawful, it seems, to ravish virgins, however unlawful it may be to have a married wife. I have often heard of the seraglio of princes, but not so often of the seraglio of priests, and those priests too, who, of all others, are the most zealous wonderers after the seven-headed beast.

Av. Distressed and comfortless, Bellarius remained at home; forsook all company, and conversed only with the various cogitations of his own foreboding mind. At one time he conjectured that his hapless daughter, in some inadvertent moment, might have blasphemed either the wooden virgin Mary, or the great high-priest of Rome, or the holy inquisitors, in which case he gave her up for lost, and doomed her to fall a sacrifice. Yet could he scarcely forgive the rigour of that religion, which had in such a merciless manner ravished her from his embrace.

It was not long after this an Armenian merchant, said to be newly arrived in Syracuse, called on him, under pretence of buying a large assortment of goods. Generous and unsuspecting, Bellarius bid him welcome to his house during his stay; which he, after some seemingly modest apologies, thankfully accepted. The pretended Armenian perceiving Bellarius to eat but little supper, now and then inadvertently to slip a sigh, took occasion to rally him in a friendly manner as if troubled with the hyp, advised him to cheer up, and hope for better times.

Bellarius having but little relish for a jest, seriously replied, "No, sir, the hyp is not my present disease, neither have my affairs in trade taken an adverse turn; and yet there is one thing which gives me great distress." The friendly Armenian was now more importunate to know his grievance, that he might at least sympathize with him in his affliction. Little suspecting that he was conflicting with priestly subtilty, he thought he might safely lodge his circumstances in the generous bosom of a merchant; he replied, "Sir, I suppose you are a stranger in Syracuse; as such let me advise you, as you value your life and liberty, to be careful of your words, and every part of your deportment during your abode, for this is a place of danger. I have, sir, one only daughter, the perfect image of her lovely mother, whom I had the misery to bury but a few months ago. I know not by what temptation, but my poor girl has

said something dishonourable either of the lady of Loretto, his holiness the pope, or their lordships the inquisitors, for which she is imprisoned in the holy office, and I suppose must answer it with her life."

"Oh, sir, I hope not," said the Armenian; "the lady's youth will intercede for her, and after some gentle admonition, your daughter will be returned to the house of her father."

"Ah, sir!" rejoined disconsolate Bellarius, "I cannot but fear that her youth and beauty are her greatest enemies and accusers. These are qualities capable of impressing the heart even of an inquisitor. If this is the case, my poor daughter is already either dead or debauched. Or should it happen that any thing has been alleged against her religious conduct, there are instruments enough in the Inquisition, and their lordships want not skill to use them; instruments sufficient to make a helpless virgin confess that which even never entered her thoughts; so that, at all events, her death or dishonour is ensured. No, sir, it is not possible for me to hope for better, seeing the least hint thrown out against the Inquisition is condemned as unpardonable blasphemy."

It was not long after this discourse, before the Armenian feigned a necessity of going out, went straight to the Inquisition and made information, being a jesuit disguised as a merchant; and that very night a coach was sent to conduct Bellarius to the cells of their dreadful prison. Next day his effects were seized by order of the holy fathers, who now rejoiced that at last they had grasped the long wished-for prey. Confined in an abominable cell, he was greatly annoyed by vermin; and being divers times examined by torture, he died with grief for his daughter, who, as she could never freely yield to the loathsome embrace of those murderers, in a few months tired their patience. Then one of their sanctified ruffians first murdered her, and then burned her to ashes in the dry-pan. It is amazing, gentlemen, to what lengths the lust of money and women will carry men.

Fa. Indeed, cousin, I think your friends the inquisitors bid fair for equalling the most subtle of our fraternity. Oh, what means of procuring wealth have you taught their reverences of the Romish hierarchy! Selling of dispensa-

tions and pardons, begging of money for masses, &c. &c. are profitable articles, and turn to a good account. But if I remember right you told me a few days since, your vassals are divided into several companies or communities, and that people of all kingdoms, ranks, and professions, are at this day worshippers of the god Avaro. I should be glad to hear something farther about them.

Av. I did so, sir, and shall be ready farther to oblige you, if to give you a brief view of our corporation, which, like all other towns corporate, consists of divers companies, will do it. The first of which is that of,

The lawyers: a very wise set of gentlemen; who exceed the children of light in the art of money-getting, as far as any of the inhabitants of our territories; of course they are held in great estimation, as gentlemen of the first intelligence. In our city of Avarice there is no knowledge deemed of any avail, no conduct accounted virtuous, besides that of money-getting. He is always the wisest, best, and most virtuous man, who best succeds in the lucrative art, whether in law, or in trade, or otherwise. There was a time, you know, when the law was as straight and clear as a beam of light, and needed no expounding; so that every man was his own counsellor. But ever since the kings of England were kept prisoners under a guard, lest truth should become familiar to the royal ear, the case has been quite altered: now it is so full of pleas and demurrers, doubts and exceptions, &c. that it is a perfect labyrinth; dangerous for an honest man to enter. For in the lawyers' company it is a standing rule, that whether the plaintiff or defendant lose the cause, the lawyers on both sides are sure to be considerable gainers. Indeed, it is very seldom but they manage the matter so, that all parties except themselves are losers; and if he who gains the trial finds himself in the end to be a loser, how do you think must it fare with the wretch, against whom the verdict is given? If an honest man has a mind to purchase an estate ever so fairly, and pay for it ever so honestly, he will find it a difficult matter, so to secure his title, but if any succeeding heir be bred to the law, or heiress be married to a lawyer, he may run a risk of being jostled out of his property, by some knavish quirk in law, without any allowance made either for the estate or its improvements.

Indeed, sir, it may be said of my faithful disciples, the lawyers, attornies, bailiffs, &c. that they pay as little regard to truth as the greatest of ourselves. Right and wrong, equity and oppression, are no objects of their regard, providing the case will yield good advantage, and bring large grist to their mill. An instance of this, if you please, gentlemen, I shall give you.

Contumelius was a Yorkshire gentleman, of distinguished birth and ample fortune, but somewhat a-kin to the mad Macedonian. His country seat stood by the side of a lane, through which neighbouring farmers passed with their teams for time immemorial. But so much passing and repassing of the whistling clowns following their waggons, at last proved very offensive to the worshipful squire, so that he resolved to remove the intolerable nuisance by blocking up the way. A gate was accordingly put up, and fastened with a padlock, effectually to stop the clownish passengers from passing as before, and turned them by a way considerably more distant.

As soon as the squire's proceedings reached the ear of Mr. Loveright, a neighbouring farmer, he ordered his waggon to drive directly to the gate, and finding it locked, took an axe, which he had brought with him for that purpose, and to the great mortification of squire Contumelius hewed it to pieces. His worship in a rage posted to Mr. Deceitful, a very eminent lawyer in the neighbouring town, for his advice. The worthy lawyer finding this a proper occasion of serving his own interest, advised the squire to send for a writ, and commence an action against the farmer for his intolerable insolence. In a few days the writ was served on Loveright, who immediately waited on lawyer Deceitful, in order, if possible, to compromise the matter.

He no sooner entered the office, than Mr. Deceitful took him aside, and thus addressed him: "I am heartily sorry, my good Mr. Loveright, that I have been in a manner obliged by his worship Contumelius, to send for a writ against you. But I assure you, sir, in my opinion your side of the question is by much the safest; and, might I advise you, it would be to stand a trial, and by no means submit to a compromise." Knowing the farmer to be a man of substance and resolution, continued he, "There is no bearing with such insolent treatment. For my own part,

Mr. Loveright, I would much rather you had been my client on the present occasion, than the giddy squire; but he first applied to me, and insisted on my doing what I have done. If you please, you may apply to my brother Falsehood, who is as skilful as any man, and as honest as any lawyer I know. In the mean while, sir, you may depend on me as your real friend, ready to serve you in every thing consistent with my reputation."

As soon as Loveright was departed, Mr. Deceitful took horse, and rode directly to the squire's house; told him the farmer had been with him, heartily repented of his folly, and was very desirous of coming to terms of agreement. "But were the case mine," said he, "I would listen to no terms of accommodation, but punish his insolence to the utmost rigour of law. The low-lived fellow, having got forward in the world, has forgotten himself; and if suffered now to escape with impunity, he will be the pest of the neighbourhood." Thus the worthy lawyer irritated both parties, till he had made sure of an assize hearing, that in the debate he might likewise insure to himself a sum very considerable. For he knew very well, that if ever a difference falls into the insatiable maw of the court, it will never be disgorged till all costs of suit are amply paid off; for it is impossible for my mercenary scribblers to give any credit. Let them act justly or unjustly, they make sure of their fees; and as the one party must necessarily lose, both counsellor and attorney take care to father the miscarriage of the cause on something which the client has done, which he ought not; or omitted, which he ought to have done; and notwithstanding all their fraud and deceit, both of them come off good honest lawyers. The

Second company, and next in reputation to that of the lawyers, is the parsons' company, which is also very flourishing and reverend. That you may not mistake my meaning, by parsons I intend all in general, of every denomination, who are ministers merely for the sake of a living; more especially,

1. All who profess to my lord bishop that they are moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them the office of a deacon, when in reality it is the hope of a benefice by which they are stimulated; and who afterwards, in the course of their pulpiteering, tell the people, that it is en-

thusiasm in any person to expect to receive the Holy Ghost in these days.

2. All who, sustaining the sacerdotal character, lead men into sin, or harden those who are insensible, either by conniving at the sins of their people, or by being guilty of the like themselves. These gentlemen are pretty numerous.

3. All who act rigorously towards their parishioners in regard to temporal things; who evidently shew more concern about tithes and offerings, than about the everlasting welfare of their people.

4. All in holy orders who, through covetousness, idleness, or any other unjustifiable cause, withhold from their people the stated ministration of the word and ordinances. Set a mark upon them, for they are all my disciples.

5. Wherever you meet with a gentleman in holy orders, who is so far above the bulk of his auditory, that he will not condescend to converse even with the meanest, about the state of his soul, the work of the spirit, and way of salvation; such are idle shepherds, unnatural pastors, and altogether devoted to the god Avaro.

Im. So then, cousin, I find you have parsons of more denominations than one; they are not all engrossed by the established churches in England and on the continent, it seems. Yet I meet with many who with great warmth will vindicate their own denomination by wholesale, and deem it little less than blasphemy, to suppose that they embrace any thing erroneous. Yet none more ready to censure and condemn those who are of a different persuasion in religious things.

Av. The truth is, my parsons are scattered abroad among all sects of professors; for the time is not yet come, that any one sect can justly assert, that none of their ministers have any other object in view but the glory of God and the good of mankind. Nor will the time commence before that important question, "Who shall be the greatest?" is finally decided; which it is thought will be a great while first, seeing it hath already puzzled the schoolmen leaders of the church for sixteen centuries back. But to return to the parsons' company; wherever you meet with a clergyman who answers the description I have given, you need not ask him whether he is a churchman or a dissenter. All you have to do, is to put Belzebub's mark upon

his forehead; and take assurance of him, that at a certain time he shall not fail to visit the nether regions, and take his abode in the infernal palace.

In this very populous company there is great diversity of ranks, even where there is an equality of genius; for some, having scarcely finished their apprenticeship, are inducted into livings, and instantly commence rectors and tithe gatherers. Others, for want of friends, are obliged, much against their inclinations, to continue underlings all the length of a tedious life. I have seen a handsome person, ere now, riding upon four or five steeples at once, and having more in expectation; whilst his fellow-student could scarcely procure brown bread and Welsh butter; and amongst all the pluralists in my acquaintance, I know not of one that has got livings enow; but give, give, is still their fervent prayer to my lord bishop, or some other patron who has a benefice to bestow. Many indeed think they should be quite contented, if they had but one more benefice added to what they now enjoy: but I can tell you, could they come by another, there would still be another wanting. It is much, now so many clergymen find themselves uneasy in the trammels, if they do not at last take it into their heads to persuade the legislature, that a clergyman cannot preach in three or four churches at one and the same time; and that it is not perfectly consistent, either with Christianity or reason, that one clergyman should have three or four livings, whilst another has none. Should it come to this, my company must be terrible sufferers.

Im. One would really think, if the cure of souls is as weighty a concern as some people make it, the parsons would not be so fond of pluralities; of adding living to living, and parish to parish.

Av. The cure of souls, forsooth! My parsons care not who take the souls. The fleece, cousin, the fleece, attracts their attention. Give an avaricious parson the fleece, and you make fairies of the souls of the parishioners if you will. Many of them do very little of the priest's office, besides collecting the tithes and offerings; at which they are wonderfully dexterous. But as to preaching, they have no notion of it, and less still of visiting the sick, were they even in the jaws of death. I assure you, gentlemen, those idol-shepherds are of the greatest use to our government.

The interest of hell could not prosper as it does, were we not well befriended by many gentlemen in holy orders.

Fa. Indeed, cousin, I have often thought, that without their assistance we should be ill put to it, to maintain our ground against the votaries of Immanuel. What posting to and from hell is there amongst our sable brethren, when but one faithful and zealous Gospel minister arises in a nation! You may remember, when Luther and Calvin broke the chain of the pope and the devil, and lifted up the voice of the Gospel trumpet, which resounded through the bowels of hell, and made the pillars of our infernal kingdom totter, what hurly-burly we all were in! What deep consultations in the divan! What diligence in action with our forces upon earth!

Av. True, sir, but times are much altered for the better; many a well-paid parson now-a-days is so obliging as to sing a lullaby to his people, when he finds them snoring in the sleep of security, and will suffer no man to attempt their awakening. He kindly tells them, "that they may sleep on now, and take their rest, for the wolf is gone out of the country, and will not for a great while return. Let no man disturb you with idle notions, for you may all go asleep to heaven without ever knowing what conversion means."

In. It is admirable what power these same gentlemen have gotten over reason and religion; I have often thought, that if ever they were to read their Bibles with attention, they could not be off from seeing that they themselves are the identical persons intended by the idle, idol-shepherds, and unfaithful watchmen, against whom so many curses are denounced in Scripture. The idle shepherds, you know, are such who feed and adorn themselves with the spoils of the flock, which is suffered to perish unwarned, and to die for lack of knowledge. The idol-shepherd is that lordly priest, that downy doctor, who keeps at an awful distance from men of ordinary rank, and is too much of the gentleman to give himself any concern about the souls of his parishioners.

Many of those idol-shepherds I know, who possess some hundreds, ay, some of them thousands per annum, who will not so much as ask one of their cure, whether he intends to go to heaven or hell at death, or whether he

serves God or the devil; yet if a parishioner die, they will keep as penetrating a look out for their fees, as an eagle for his prey, and seize it with equal eagerness. Moreover, for the sake of this same fee, they will own the deceased for a brother, which privilege was always denied him whilst alive, unless he should indeed have happened to be one of the fat of the flock, who was capable of yielding a double fleece.

Av. It is the fleece, sir, which my disciples regard, and not the flock; how have I been diverted sometimes, both at church and meeting-house, to hear the parson, with an air the most supercilious and contemptful, railing at the most useful of God's ministers, as enthusiasts, fanatics, and methodists. Ah! said I to myself, what poor honest devils were those of old, who confessed Christ and his disciples, and thus declared to the sons of Sceva: "Jesus we know, and Paul we know; but who are you?"

Sometimes I hear them crying with vehemence against the divinity of Immanuel; one making him some kind of a super-angelical being, and another asserting that he is only a man like themselves. Then, say I, what a pusillanimous spirit was that same devil Legion, who, without receiving either tithe or offering, confessed Jesus of Nazareth to be the only Son of God, to whom the Scriptures ascribe every divine honour. But these parsons are well paid for confessing him, and yet deny him with the utmost insolence.

There is never a day but I hear some of this company charging the lie upon one text or other of the Bible. One tells his people that there is no such thing as one being chosen to salvation more than another; but that the love of God is equal unto, and upon all men, whether Jew or Gentile, Turk or Pagan, Papist or Protestant; nay then, say I, master parson, you are become a dissenter from your own seventeenth article. And, to speak within compass, there are at least a thousand pulpits in the church occupied by such dissenters.

Then I hear others railing against those who preach salvation by grace; and at the same time assuring their people, that they must be saved by their own holiness and good works. Very well, say I, then I have my desire, for upon these terms they will never be saved at all. But still I am at a loss how they dare so barefacedly give the lie to Paul

the apostle, who taught the church, that "By grace they were saved through faith, and that not of themselves, but the gift of God." I hear many clergymen of the established church, in entering upon the service, thus address the Majesty of heaven: "Lord, cleanse thou the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit;" and, in less than an hour after, telling their parishioners that it is mere enthusiasm in any man to expect in these days to be at all influenced by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

So glaring the contradictions which sometimes they are guilty of, that I tremble with fear, lest the people should be convinced of the truth; but these are favourable times, gentlemen, very favourable; for the greatest part of the people have something else to think of when they go to church, besides either preaching or prayer.

When I hear the parson, whether churchman or dissenter, telling his people how holy and pure the heart of man is by nature; how aptly formed for sentiments of the most exalted piety, and for entertaining the love of God; I am wonderfully at a loss to know, how he came by more extensive knowledge of mankind than Jesus Christ, who expressly taught that whatsoever defileth the man, proceeds out of the heart. Your influences, Fastosus, are of excellent use, in keeping them where they are; you take care to persuade each of them separately, that of all others his own knowledge is the most refined; and hence it is that Goodwin, Owen, Charnock, and all such authors, are considered as weak though well-meaning divines.

It is very diverting to hear my parsons boasting of their superior knowledge, even when by their ministrations it is plain, that they are acquainted with almost any writings better than those of inspiration; when their auditories dwindle away to nothing, and the few people who abide by them are destitute of all religion. Did they but know half as much as the most illiterate devil of our fraternity, they would at least believe that there may be a possibility of their mistaking the way, and that, after all their pretensions to superior knowledge, they may run some risk of a final miscarriage. But, as our good friends the Roman doctors are wont to say, "Ignorance is the mother of devotion;" so say I of my parsons, "Ignorance is the spring of all their knowledge;" and whilst my father Infidelis can keep them

ignorant, my uncle Fastosus can easily puff them up with a sense of the clearness of their heads, and goodness of their hearts; so that I can do very well with them, and retain them amongst our worshippers.

3. The next company in our corporation is that of the Straining Landlords, a very noble and reputable company indeed; notwithstanding they are far from being opulent. In the days of yore, when luxury was but in little vogue, the freeholders were attended with fewer wants, and of course this company was less flourishing; but since these happy days commenced, in which people of quality are trained up in absolute idleness and dissipation; in which virtue is of no account, and luxury, pride, and dissoluteness, are arrived at their zenith; the people of quality are amazingly poor, and are attended with an undescribable train of necessities. What is very remarkable, their pride has grown in a perfect proportion to their poverty; so that now it is an established law amongst them, to look upon themselves as of a different blood from the rest of mankind. Indeed you cannot affront a person of quality worse, than by likening him to one of those who are called vulgar creatures; notwithstanding, by the way, it is those same vulgar creatures which enable persons of rank and fashion to support the dignity of their station; and were there no vulgar creatures, there would also be no ladies of quality.

This distinction which the quality pay to themselves, is of the utmost use in my administration, as will appear from the following story:

I went one day to the house of Sir Fop Mortalis, a very famous gentlemen in the country, with a design to pay my devoirs to madam Mortalis, his lady; a gentlewoman who abhors to have the least comparison made betwixt her and any person whatever of inferior rank. The chambermaid informed her mistress that good Mr. Prudence waited below, desiring to speak with her ladyship, if convenient; the lady soon descended, and, compliments passed on either side, she conducted me into her parlour, where she and I had the following dialogue:

Lady. Good, Mr. Prudence, you have been a very great stranger! It is now many months since I saw you at our house; but I am glad to see you now, and I wish in my heart Sir Fop Mortalis had been at home.

PRUDENCE. Urgent business, madam, demands my attendance so much elsewhere, that I cannot so frequently as I would wish, pay my respects to Sir Fop and my lady Mortalis. But now, madam, I am come, if possible to rectify a growing mistake amongst mankind; and must tell your ladyship that I am heartily sorry to see the world arrived at such a pitch of ambition as it is now. Indeed, my lady, it is become a very difficult matter, in a concourse of people, to distinguish between the farmers' and tradesmen's wives, and ladies of birth and fortune; nor can we more easily distinguish between their several children. Why, madam, the farmers' and tradesmen's children are all masters and misses; young gentlemen and ladies, now-a-days. I know not, for my part, what the world will come to, if some measures are not speedily taken to prevent the confounding of baseness with dignity.

When I was last at church, I was surprised to see, as I thought, Miss Mortalis, your daughter, there; well knowing that neither Sir Fop himself, nor any of his family, go often to any place of public worship. Because you know, my lady, few of you great folks love the tedious duties of religion.

LA. Not we, indeed; give us the cards, or musical entertainments, for our money. We hate their whining doleful cant; let them choose religion who have taste for nothing more polite. We'll have none of it, I assure you, Mr. Prudence.

PR. I know it, my lady, I know it, and am mightily pleased with your determination. But, as I was telling your ladyship, being at church, as soon as service was over, I said to a man who sat in the pew with me, "I am surprised to see Miss Mortalis at church to-day. Do you think, sir, that any body has been daring enough to tell her that she really is a mortal?" To which the plain countryman, in his clownish way, replied, "Miss Mortalis at church, quoth-a—no, no, sir, you are quite mistaken; for Sir Fop's family are people of quality, and therefore meddle none with religion. What should they do at church, seeing they fear no hell, regard not God, and believe not in the devil; as for heaven, Sir Fop is willing to leave that to the poor, and desires no greater happiness for himself and his, than is implied in an earldom."

La. That is, indeed, what Sir Fop has long been soliciting, and it is believed is now very near obtaining.

Pr. But, said I to the fellow, pray who is that young lady whom I took for Miss Mortalis? "Poh, lady, quoth-a —why 'tis, John Tillground's daughter, o' the Five Elms." Tillground's daughter! said I, you surprise me; she is as finely dressed as I have seen Miss Mortalis when going to a ball. And pray, continued I, who is yonder lady, with the French head-dress and furred cardinal? I thought you had had no people of quality in this parish, besides Sir Fop's family. "No, sir," returned he, "we have none who are such by birth, but we have many who are quality by their dress. The lady, sir, that you inquire after, is Mrs. Watson, the landlady at the Three Tuns."

Well, madam, I followed them out of church, and was amazed to see the plaitings of hair, the tires of ruffles, and the labyrinthian furlebows with which the women were decorated. Indeed, my lady, if the world holds on but a few years in its present career, we shall not be able to distinguish between the highest and the lowest ranks of people.

La. To be sure, sir, the world is now at a sad pitch of pride and ambition, for people of fashion can do nothing as to dress, gesture, manner of speech, or living, but we are mimicked by those vulgar creatures.

Pr. It must undoubtedly be considered as an insufferable insult upon people of breeding, when they are thus taken off by the vulgar. But, madam, I have a scheme to propose, which, if adopted, will effectually correct their insolence, and soon oblige John Tillground and Timothy Turf's daughters to lay aside their furlebows, ruffles, and tea-table, and betake themselves to their spinning-wheels.

La. What is it? I pray you, good Mr. Prudence, be so obliging; I beg you would, sir.

Pr. Indeed, madam, your farmers are all become gentlemen of late; they talk of fortunes for their children, and consider themselves as very little inferior to the squire himself; but let me tell you, madam, the fault is not so much in the farmers, as in the landlords themselves, who let their farms upon terms by far too low and easy. There is this same John Tillground, and his neighbour Timothy Turf, as I am informed, have both of them money lying at interest, when my worthy and right honourable lord Noble,

a gentlemen of the first quality, is obliged to pawn his plate for cash, to pay off the four thousand pounds he lost the other night at cards; and whilst his gentle neighbour, 'squire Fitzfolly, is obliged to fell his timber to stop the horrid gap which his malevolent stars opened at Newmarket races, where the gamblers of rank and quality occasionally try their fortune.

It is insufferable, madam, that the farmers' circumstances should be easy whilst people of fashion know not how to keep off the duns from the doors. What right has any body to any thing besides slavery, except people of quality? Were not those vulgar creatures originally designed as your slaves, madam? and yet, for any thing I see, they will soon be on a level with you, unless some method, lucky enough to prevent it, is speedily devised.

La. Ah, sir, I fear it indeed. If you do know of any suitable means to prevent it, I beg, good Mr. Prudence, you will inform me.

Pr. There is only one way that I know of, madam, and that is to raise their rents to the uttermost. As every lease expires, it will be an easy matter for Sir Fop, in the renewal of it, to advance the rent as high as he pleases. The slaves dare not go away; and if they should, there will be others foolish enough to agree to any terms, rather than miss of a farm. This done, and all your tenants settled upon the racked farms, if any one of them happens to rear a handsome colt, let Sir Fop himself, or young master, fall in love with it, demand it of its owner for so much, never exceeding half its value; he may privately grumble, but dare not refuse, for fear of offending his honour. By these means, and others which occasion will suggest, you may make them all humble enough.

La. Most excellently spoken, good Mr. Prudence. Then, Tillground's wife will be obliged to sell her china-ware to procure rags for her brats; the daughter must take to her wheel and wash-tub; and my son, master Thomas, will ride a better horse than he now does. This scheme will certainly conquer the ambition of the farmers; but what will it do for the tradesmen, good Mr. Prudence; they will still continue an eye-sore?

Pr. Indeed, madam, the same scheme will produce very humbling effects upon tradesmen of every kind; though I

dare not assert, that you will ever be able perfectly to subject to your ambition and avarice that honourable body of merchants whom you affectedly called cits. No, madam, I am afraid that nobility itself must give place to the public spirit of the merchant; yet even them you may greatly injure, and prevent their being of such essential service to their country, as otherwise they might be. But as to inland trade, by racking your tenants in the manner prescribed, you may absolutely destroy it. That you may see the utility of this scheme, I shall a little explain it to your ladyship.

If the farmers are racked to the utmost, they will be obliged to sell the produce of their lands at an exorbitant price, otherwise it will be altogether out of their power to pay the stipulated rent. And besides selling their crops, &c. for an advanced price, they will be obliged to abridge the wages of all their labourers, smiths, carpenters, &c.

By these means the farmer will find it very difficult to live, and of course will rarely visit the mercers' and drapers' shops; and as for his labourers and workmen, they will find but little money to lay out in clothes; especially if their children be numerous, as the demands of the back must always give place to the louder calls of the belly. And as you know, my lady, sterility very rarely dwells in the labourer's cottage; it is unknown what misery you may happily introduce amongst them by the scheme proposed. The draper's goods will lie upon his hands, unless indeed he is pleased to give credit to the poor: if the former, he will be sparing of his orders; and if the latter, we shall soon have him a bankrupt, so that he will be effectually ruined.

You see, madam, that here we affect the manufacturer equally with the farmer and shopkeeper; for when the retail trade is ruined by the dearness of provisions, the manufacturer will find little call for his goods; the issue of which will be, the disbanding of many of his journeymen, and abridging the wages of the rest. The disbanded journeymen being incapable of finding employment, and not having learned the art of living, like the cameleon, on the air, will be drove to thieving, by which means America will be peopled, and Tyburn Chronicle rendered respectable.

As to the manufacturer himself, his capital being soon converted into manufactured goods, he will be obliged to sell them under their value, that he may keep up his credit with the merchant, and be able to carry on a little trade, vainly hoping that times may alter for the better.

La. Indeed, sir, your scheme is very feasible, and yet there is one thing that will put the manufacturer absolutely out of our power. I mean, sir, the exportation of their manufacture. I don't know how it is, but these cits of merchants can send goods anywhere, and they, sir, will support the manufacturer.

Pr. No, madam, I assure you my scheme if cordially adopted, and executed with vigour, will put it absolutely out of the merchant's power. There is nothing can recommend the English manufacture at a foreign market, but the price being inferior to that of other nations. Now, if an Englishman must pay twice as dear for his provision in his own country, as a Frenchman does in his, it is easy to see that either journeymen's wages must in England be double to what they are in France, or the journeymen must starve; which few Englishmen are fond of doing. The consequence of this is, the French manufacturer can send his goods to a foreign market upon better terms than an Englishman, and of course destroy all the foreign trade of the English nation. Thus, madam, I have pointed out a method by which you people of fashion, in order to support your own grandeur, may suck the blood of all inferior ranks of people, and make the British subjects absolutely slaves, even in a country which boasts its freedom. Nay more, this is a method by which you may ruin the most flourishing nation in the word.

La. Spoke like an angel, good Mr. Prudence. I protest, upon honour, I will not sleep till I have consulted Sir Fop on the matter.

Av. I took my leave of her ladyship, who could not rest till she had communicated the matter to her acquaintances, and they to their acquaintances, and so they again to theirs, that it had very soon made the tour of Great Britain and Ireland; an ordinance was instituted in the company of avaricious landlords, that in every future lease the farmers should be racked to the last extremity. This ordinance has been universally complied with by the whole

company; so that there is reason to hope, in time, all the blessed consequences proposed will arise from it, as you may see to what an exorbitant price all manner of provisions are already arrived. What may not be expected from such hopeful beginnings?

FA. A noble company indeed, and near a-kin to our destroying clan. And yet many of them set up for patriots, even when they are drawing ruin upon the nation by their pride, luxury, and avarice.

DIALOGUE XVIII.

Containing wholesome Instructions to the Ladies.

FA. No, Avaro; know assuredly that you are no more in esteem with the Dutch than myself. It were strange, indeed, if I had no concern with Mynheer.

AV. Indeed, sir, to see Mynheer equipped in his holiday clothes, he makes pretty near as awkward an appearance as a Laplander; and one would certainly conclude that he is a perfect stranger to courtly Fastosus. But all the world knows that Avaro is a very respectable personage in Holland.

FA. I told you before, cousin, that you have an ugly way of encroaching upon your neighbour's right. I do not like it, cousin, and will assert my dominion. Do you think that Mynheer is not full as proud of his multiplicity of garments, as an English hero of his scarlet and lace? Or, that he is not the best fellow who can wear the greatest number of pairs of breeches? I assert, there may be as much pride under a Dutchman's cap as under a Scotch bonnet, or even under a Frenchman's hat; notwithstanding there is a very great difference between the first and the last. The first, you know, is a fixed, ponderous substance, and the last is mutable as the weathercock on the top of St. Peter's. Yes, Avaro, I may assert farther, that there may be as much pride under a red cap as under the coronet of a peer, or even under the mitre of an archbishop.

IN. That Avaro is in high esteem in the Netherlands, will not be denied; but to suppose Fastosus excluded from any people whatever, is highly dishonouring; therefore, my son, you must learn to be more cautious, and for the

present, to make atonement for your error, proceed with your account of your corporation.

Av. If to retract an error, and endeavour in future to oblige, will procure forgiveness, it shall be done. In order to which, you will please to observe, that the

Fourth company of my corporation is that of the letter-retailers, otherwise called mercenary-scribblers, and false-publishers. The transcribers and abridgers of other men's works, especially those whose sole aim is to get money by their writings, are free of this company, and on the livery.

To give you a proper idea of which, I shall read you a letter, which I stole the other night from the chairman of a reading society in the country, designed to be sent to the reviewers, critical and monthly.

"GENTLEMEN,

"We are what country people call a Reading Society, into which we had formed ourselves some years before the first Review made its public appearance. We had not long taken in books, before we found several articles of our purchase to be stolen from other authors; and but very few of our titular authors had either honour or honesty enough to inform the public from what sources they compiled their volumes. We would advise all writers to live upon their own proper genius, deeming it a pity that pilferers should be suffered in the republic of letters. At the last meeting of our club, this question was put and canvassed, 'What can induce one writer to steal from another?'

"To this important question, one replied one thing, and another said what he could to confute it, as every member was willing to display his abilities; at last Dick Keene, a testy kind of youth, but of good sense, gave us the following satisfactory answer:

"'Very probably,' said master Dick, 'some authors may steal from others, for the same reason which that celebrated fool of old had, who burnt himself and the temple together, in order to perpetuate his name. There are authors endued with the same laudable ambition, who, not being happy enough to have been born free in the literary republic, are obliged to stoop to dishonest measures, in order to gratify their ambition. Their geniuses (if it be lawful to

speak of their geniuses) being destitute of every prolific principle, and their fancies fixed as the Pyrenean or the Alps; they cannot possibly gain repute but on the credit of their predecessors. Therefore, what frugal nature and Gamaliel hath withheld, must be supplied by industrious freedom; and as the end proposed must at all events be obtained, honour, truth, and honesty smoke at once on the altar of ambition. To work goes the writer; plunders every volume in his own and his patron's library; at last completes his scheme; and lo! we have an entirely new work by the learned Mr. Dunce. And so it comes to pass, that we the honest purchasers, pay three or four times over for the same matter, and perhaps in almost the same manner likewise.

"'There are others, who, as a just judgment on their former indolence and extravagance, are now condemned to live upon their wit; which being dull and tardy, somewhat a-kin to the brain of an ass, of itself can afford but a very penurious table, and uncomfortable lodging. Bitten with hunger, the unhappy man is obliged to steal where he can, and then to sell his ill-gotten collection to the bookseller, in order to procure a good holiday dinner. The bookseller, I believe, is pretty well convinced of the truth of my remarks, as he has paid smart for his connexion with literary thieves.

"'Of these two kinds of pilferers, in my humble opinion, the latter is by far the most excusable. He cannot work, he is ashamed to beg, therefore must either steal or starve. What can he steal with more safety than the works of the learned? In my opinion, there is no more danger in robbing a gentleman of his literary honour, than for a statesman to rob his mother-country: few such thieves are conducted by the country officers to Tyburn. Oh, solemn tree! what frauds are committed against thee! Of how many necks, equitably thine, art thou cheated annually!'

"'Twas now Bill Candour, a good-natured youth, interrupted him, thinking his reflections somewhat severe. 'Hold, Mr. Keene, I think your reasoning is too full of acrimony. If all transcripts, extracts, and abridgments were to be suppressed, it would be a very great loss to the public; those men, therefore, who take the trouble of such a service, deserve open acknowledgment for raising up va-

luable authors from the vaults of oblivion, instead of being lashed with the rod of merciless satire.' To which Dick replied,

"'That many ancient writings are truly worthy of being introduced to public view, I am so far from denying, that I should deem it truly laudable for any gentleman of capacity and leisure to draw forth the remains of antiquity from the cells of obscurity, and should be one of the first to vote him the most public thanks. But I would have it done in such a manner as to come within the reach of the middle class of people, amongst whom the bulk of all sorts of readers is found. Moreover, I would have writings on religious subjects so contrived, as to come within the reach of the poor, for who else give themselves any trouble about religion, or have any pleasure in serious writings? If a commentary on the Bible must go beyond the extent of their finances, it might as well be locked up in Pool's Synopsis, where it was before the commentary was written. Opulent tradesmen, you know, are such slaves to the laws of getting, that they have no time to read, and therefore may prudently avoid purchasing. And people of fashion are generally perfectly satisfied with having such or such books in their libraries, without so much as looking farther into them than the title-pages. Surely, gentlemen, no man is to be vindicated in making merchandise of his neighbour's genius.'

"Here he concluded, and we were soon convinced that there was much weight in his reasoning. We must beg leave to tell you, gentlemen, that when your worships erected your tribunal, and every author was summoned to appear before you, we flattered a hope that all pilferers would have fled out of the republic of letters. But, alas! we have been hitherto disappointed, and, in reality, they seem to be on the increase; so that a man can hardly claim personal right to a single idea, how justly soever it may be his property.

"We earnestly beg that you, gentlemen, will be obliging enough to publish your aversion to this craft; to command all who are destitute both of fortune and genius, to reconcile themselves to their destiny, and shew their submission to the higher power, by learning some handicraft business, by which they may gain an honest living. There are a

thousand ways to live in the world, if that of an author were to cease. For instance, there is carrying a musket or beating a drum by land, and furling the sails by sea, either of which are honourable employments, when compared with that of book-stealing.

"As we know not to whom we can apply with any hope of success, but to yourselves, we must farther beg, that you will not only detect the theft when you meet with it, but do as the worthy inhabitants of St. Giles's do on similar occasions: that is, pursue the delinquent with a stop thief; stop thief. Indeed, gentlemen, it will not lessen you in the public esteem, should you commence even literary thief-catchers. Should it please you to comply with our request, we doubt not but the streets which lead to places of public resort, will in a few years be well lined with many authors, having assumed the more honourable employment of a beggar.

"Thus the imposts would be taken off from the studious; real authors would preserve their honour, no one daring to invade their right, for fear of exposing themselves to public infamy. Perhaps that most villanous of all practices may be put a stop to; we mean the vending of cloudy commentaries on the Bible: few people, we should think, would be fond of purchasing such books, after they are informed that most of the materials are stolen. Effectually to put a stop to this iniquitous practice, we would recommend the publication of the above-named synopsis in English, and then every reader may take what human sense of the divine word he pleases.

"We are, gentlemen,
"Your most humble servants,
"A Reading Society."

Fa. Indeed, cousin, I think the request of that society reasonable enough, and ought to be granted; for as the world now goes, it is a difficult matter for a man to know to whom he is obliged for any profitable hint he meets with in the course of his reading. And flimsy as modern productions in general are, there is now and then a profitable hint to be met with. But when any thing of a recommendatory quality happens to emerge from the teem-press, the whole race of catch-penny imitators swarm about it and

gobble it up, then spew it out as if it were their own. However, cousin, it must be owned, there are some of your mercenary scribblers who are much more honourable than others; and let the public know, that what they write is not the fruit of their own genius, but is borrowed from this or that respectable author, under pretence of making it more public, on account of its great excellency. They desire not to rob the author of his honour: all they deem necessary, is a loan of his genius to supply the defects of their own, and to help them a little forward in the world.

But of all writers, commend me to polemic divines. Oh! it would be a pleasure to the devil himself, to see with what dexterity they put off their own anger, under the name of zeal for God; just as the industrious tradesmen of Birmingham do their manufacture for the coin of the nation. It is amazing to think how protestant ministers can lug in the Almighty into both sides of their quarrel; and how they would make the world believe, that their cause is the cause of Heaven, and that they have got authority to dispense the curses of the Most High. Nothing can be more pleasing than to see men of wisdom and religion vigorously contending for their own honour, and at the same time making the public believe they have nothing in view but the Redeemer's glory. And I assure you it is not every divine, even of great parts, who takes time to distinguish between the glory of God and his own reputation.

Next to this, I am delighted to see men of learning and religion bickering each other about subjects, which the greatest of all the apostles would not presume to pry into. But we have divines so expert, that they understand what never was revealed; and so zealous, that they will oblige others to have the same degree of intelligence with themselves, under pain of their implacable displeasure; and yet they are the true ministers of the meek and loving Saviour. But a very few are to be met with, who have humility enough to submit to the simplicity of Scripture. However, cousin, although I love to set forth my own powerful influence, I would not willingly prevent your proceeding with your story. Meanwhile, I want you to be more explicit with regard to your company of letter-venders. Do you mean by them printers in general?

Av. No, gentlemen, I do not mean either all the book-

sellers or printers. Printing has been to mankind one of the greatest of all temporal blessings, and will, I much fear, be the total ruin of the kingdom of darkness; as wherever the freedom of the press is suffered, it carries reformation along with it. But amongst those concerned in literary affairs, there are many villanous people, who, when their trade runs low, take up with printing corrupting novels, such as the Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure; blasphemous plays, such as Sammy Foote's Minor; schismatic harangues, like the greater part of political essays; vain disputes about things of trivial import, &c. all such, and many such there be, we rank with the false publishers, because truth and falsehood are with them of equal value, and their choice is fixed by what will serve a present turn. The patriotic alderman is a leading man in this learned company. He has not learned so little by the gift of second sight, which he has had from his cradle, as not to know, that more than truth is indispensably necessary to support some particular personal characters. Besides, there are others, who will sell both soul and body to the father of lies, in defence of some particular state; and others to ruin some public character. The celebrated Mr. Maubert of Brussels is a great man in this way.

Free of this company, is another set of men, implacable enemies to honest industry, who live altogether by their wit; appear in all shapes and characters, and stick at nothing to get money. Although these people have nothing but grimace to sell (through a folly, formerly almost peculiar to the metropolis, but now diffusing itself everywhere), they have for six months in the year a very plentiful market; and many who would suffer the miserable to perish unrelieved at their gates, will liberally contribute to support the luxury and libertinism of the players. In the days of yore, the devil Proteus was, but now David Garrick, esq. is, their foreman; a fast friend to our government, and a faithful disciple of careful Avaro.

Di. I think you must be mistaken now, cousin; for the end of all theatrical entertainments, which I perceive you have in view, is the exposing of vice and reformation of manners; consequently their design was originally religious.

Av. I allow that in the darkness of paganism, the an-

cients had a religious design in exhibitions of the stage; but what of that? They had likewise a religious design in passing their children through the fire to the devil Moloch. I allow farther, that in the days of monkish ignorance, those blinking priests made use of the stage to convey their instructions; but then it ought to be observed, that the same fathers were equally pious and devout in persecuting the best of men. So then, cousin, the one is as much authorized by ancient practice as the other. Indeed, when you consider that the stage is peopled by extravagant, spendthrift gentlemen, broken tradesmen, lazy mechanics, who always were avowed enemies to moral integrity; they will appear to be a very unpromising race of reformers.

Should you follow them from the stage to their lodgings, and trace their steps through the lanes of private life, you would soon be convinced, that sir John Fielding's runners bid much more fair than they for reforming the manners of the people. And you know the said runners have never as yet been considered as the most respectable characters. Surely, it must be thought requisite in those who set up for reformers of others, that in some tolerable degree they should moralize themselves.

Di. I know it, cousin; and I thwarted you on purpose to see how you could justify your claim upon the gentry of the stage; and must confess you have done it to my satisfaction. I am highly pleased with the entertainments of the theatre myself, and am greatly delighted to see gentlemen and ladies crowd to them. Gentry who would worship God in neither church nor meeting-house, can be devout enough to attend the theatres in Covent-Garden and the Haymarket. It is truly pleasing to see gentlemen and ladies, who cannot possibly find money to pay off their tradesmen's bills, find plenty of cash to purchase playhouse and pantheon tickets.

In. As we came along, cousin Discordans, you mentioned some sport you lately had with two female companions; pray what of them?

Di. You must know, Leonora and Matilda have been intimate from their infancy, and as such continued their friendship even to mature life; but when both became wives and mothers, I taught them to behave more inconsistently than they did when they were children. Matilda

being quite fatigued with domestic concerns, to attention to which her mind is not very happily turned, resolved one day to spend an afternoon with her friend Leonora. When she went, she found her exceedingly depressed and hysterical, by no means in a talkative humour; a circumstance which frequently happens to ladies of middle rank, ever since luxury and idleness became so prevalent amongst them.

Matilda not being sufficiently skilled in physiognomy to read the sentiments of the heart by the position of the features of the countenance, was led into a mistake, which proved fatal to their friendship. She discovered, or thought she discovered, an unusual and unexpected shyness run through every part of Leonora's conduct; which discovery proved no slight mortification to her own sensibility. Said she to herself, "Well Leonora, I perceive, notwithstanding all your former civility, that my company is not the object of your present desire. I wish I had been aware of it in time! then I assure you, my presence should not have drawn a cloud over that settled countenance of yours. But, indeed madam, let my company be ever so disagreeable to you; yours, I assure you, is now very little more pleasant to me."

Whilst she was meditating some plausible pretext for withdrawing, the tea was unhappily brought in, which precluded her removal for a little while longer. Thus constrained by decency to stay, her glowing resentment of the supposed slight forbid her to taste a morsel of the toast, or to drink above two dishes of tea. Having finished, she pretended she must retire on some urgent business, which had just occurred to her mind (for ladies will lie to serve a turn); and after a dry compliment or two, she went off, fully resolved never to return.

As she went along the streets, her wounded heart boiled with a thousand cogitations, how or when she had offended Leonora. "What have I done or said that should have given umbrage? I know of nothing; and therefore I care not for her anger. If people would be so odd in their temper, they must even come to themselves at their leisure. And so your servant, Leonora."

In. That was a visit more innocent than many I have known; for I hear nothing of slander, or defamation of

absent characters carried on in it, which very rarely happens to be neglected in female visits.

Di. True, sir; but the matter did not end here. Poor Matilda being unable to bear the conceived slight, made free to call on Letitia on her way home, that she might give a little vent to her turbulent passions. Letitia, being as destitute of innate ideas as she is of fidelity, readily listened to the plaintive account, how Matilda had been served; without hesitation approved her departure, kindly fanned the flame of resentment, and at last advised her to let Leonora come to herself when she should find it convenient.

Matilda had not been long gone, before Letitia, who burned with impatience to have a little tittle-tattle, went to Leonora, and set mischief abroach with her also. She told her all the former had said of her, and happily gave it such a turn, as to render it very offensive, notwithstanding she kept strictly to the letter of truth. Some people are remarkably happy in talents of this kind; by their manner of representation, they can turn things quite from their natural appearance, as I may perhaps shew you in some future conference. Leonora could not but think herself very ill used, and resolved, weakly as she was, that she would be a slave to nobody's temper.

When Matilda and Leonora met next time, being prepossessed with mutual disgust, their compliments were dry and starched; and each secretly blamed the indifference of the other. By this time I furnished each of them with a telescope, by which they might thoroughly examine each other's conduct; and so reciprocally strict is their mutual watch, that nothing can escape them. Thus from the smallest beginning, founded too in misunderstanding, raised perpetual disgust and enmity. Absurd and ridiculous as this is, I could point you out a thousand differences sprung from incidents equally frivolous and unimportant. Indeed, if freedom and submission keep at a distance, I can blow up a flame of contention the most violent from the smallest matters imaginable. And I thank my stars Messrs. Freedom and Submission are in no great esteem with mankind. But wherever they come, they destroy my seeds, and effectually extinguish my flames, for they are irresistible peacemakers.

FA. It is I, even I, my son, who have brought those gentlemen into disrepute. I persuade people it is beneath them to submit to their equals, how much soever they have been in the wrong. I have ere now persuaded one man to do all he could to ruin the reputation of his neighbour, in order to establish his own, when he found it in a tottering condition; and that too amongst those who take themselves to be more righteous than others.

DI. I have great pleasure sometimes in making parents become the instruments of their children's ruin; or, as some people say, to kill them with kindness. I make it my business to prejudice almost every parent so far in favour of his children, that every one considers his own as the most witty and active; or, to use the words of a good woman concerning her son of two years old, the most manly of any child in the neighbourhood; even as the crow conceives her own to be fairer than all the children of the feathered people.

I shall trouble you with but one instance, out of the millions I might produce. Little master Jacky was one of those extraordinary children whose almost every action was out of the common way, the wonder and admiration of his astonished parents. Jacky must not be chid when he pinched, bit, or scratched his nurse, but must have his own pretty little humour; it was even pleasing to see his lovely fists darted into his parents' faces; so you may be sure the child must not be suffered to cry upon any account, but must always be indulged in whatever he wanted. Thus this extraordinary child, in whom, however, none besides his parents could see any thing out of the common way, notwithstanding every visitor was plagued with the history of his wonderful feats, upon which his parents dwelt with rapture; I say, Jacky found himself master of the whole family; he acted accordingly, and took his own way in every particular.

By these means his tempers gained strength so that they became habitual, not to be broken by ordinary means.

When he got a few more years over his head, still growing in his humour, the poor parents began to see and lament the errors of their former conduct. Too late; master Jacky, being now in breeches, and grown a great boy, will not readily give back that dominion they were pleased to

put into his hands when but in petticoats. He thinks it very hard he should not choose for himself now he his ten, as well as when he was but three years old; rightly judging, that he was not more wise then than he is now; and if they thought him fit to be all their masters then, he is sure that by this time he is much more fit to govern.

Apprehensive now of the ruin of his son, the father exhibits exhortations, injunctions, reproofs, and threatenings, with great severity. In vain, for not being bended whilst tender and malleable, Master's tempers are not now to be turned out of their native channel. As in former times I plied the parents, in prejudice of their darling, it was now time to ply him also in his turn. I furnished him with a pair of glasses, and directed him in the use of them; and now the youth began to reason upon his father's conduct.

"What a change is this come to my father! Once he was something like good-natured, but now he is the most self-willed and rigorous man in the world. Surely no reasonable person would impose such laws upon his children as he does on me; laws, such as nobody of any spirit would submit to. I was formerly his pretty lad, his good boy, and every thing I did was right; times are strangely changed, for now I can do nothing to please him. I could have had what I would, and gone where I pleased; but now I am perplexed with warm exhortations, which I hear unreasonably frequent; and can go nowhere without his leave, as if I had not more sense now than when I was little. His reproofs are too harsh; I hear of nothing but my stubbornness and wickedness; of his and my mother's sorrow; and of breaking their hearts on my account. I should break none of their hearts, I assure them, if they would let me alone.

"Cannot my father and mother grieve for themselves, and not tease me about their trouble? I am no worse than my neighbours, though by their account I might be the wickedest wretch that ever lived. It is not enough that I must go to church on holidays, but we must have lectures on divinity at home: and for me, I am roundly told, that if I go on as I do, I must certainly perish. Yes, I must even be damned, and go to hell. Old people are surely very conceited; I'll warrant me they think they are so very good, they are sure to go to heaven. It is a brave thing to have

a good opinion of one's self, which surely must be their case, or they would never plague me thus with their repeated lectures. Well, for my own part, I am not so vain, and yet I think I am in no greater danger than they are. When they were young, I dare say they loved pleasure as well as me, and now they get old and cannot relish it themselves, they would absurdly restrain me from it. Reasonable parents ought not to form their commands upon what they now are, but what they were when of my age. But I am determined to submit to no such government; I will even take my pleasure whilst I can have it, and let them grieve on if they choose."

Thus, gentlemen, I persuade many to lay up future afflictions for themselves, in the early ruin of their children by over indulgence. I say early ruin, for if little master is not taught to submit to government whilst in petticoats, it is much if he ever learns submission after he is in breeches; he who always had his own way when but an infant, will take it very ill to be restrained when he rises towards manhood.* Yet some, yea many parents, will let their children do as they please whilst but little, and increase in their strictness as they advance in years, so that they become mutual afflictions to each other. In manhood, you know, children should be used by their parents as friends and confidants, instead of being kept at an awful distance. Yet those very parents, who have laid the foundation of their son's ruin, by early indulgence in his infancy, very often complete it by unseasonable strictness over him when he is verging towards man's estate. You know, parents should always act so as that their company shall never be burthensome to their children. But I shall become moralist if I go on thus.

Im. Many such youths as master Jacky fall into my hands; if once they can by any means be brought to despise reproof, I reckon myself quite sure of them; and when they come, I commonly employ them in my deepest mines.

In. It is always a hopeful sign when the heart is hardened against reproof. If a young one can be brought to despise the commands, reproofs, and advice of his parents, he bids fair for being one of the devil's companions for ever; and indeed, nothing but the grace of God can prevent it. It

* *Vide* Locke on Education.

is very agreeable to us to see how happily successful our influences are over mankind, especially in Britain. There, many parents bring up their children, just as if they designed them purposely for the devil. I have great hopes of the next generation, gentlemen.

Di. I make myself very merry with the ladies in another way, which also turns eventually to everlasting separation. I join a little knot of them together so closely for a time, that they cannot be separated, nor bear to be asunder for a day together. I prejudice them so strongly for a while in each other's favour, that they shew a manifest slight to those who are not happy enough to be admitted into their society. Family necessity, and every domestic duty, must give place to their firm attachment to one another. When they get together for a little chit-chat, they are as happy as the birds in May; not only examine every absent character within the circle of their acquaintance, and report to each other all the evil they know of their own sex; but each dwells severally upon the excellencies or failings of her husband, who is at one time the best of men, at another time the worst, just as her ladyship happens to be in a good or bad humour with him. Thus they go on, till every one is fully acquainted with the family affairs of the rest, and thus they bring themselves into the power of one another. This is the zenith of that happiness to which I aim to bring them; for even the devil will give present happiness, in order to introduce future pain and sorrow; and I assure you I am too much a-kin to my worthy grandfather, to suffer that felicity to go long uninterrupted.

First, I sow a spirit of jealousy amongst them: says Chloe, "Delia seems more attached to Phillis than to myself or Lucia; Portia is never happy but when her and Arabella are together;" and so round the whole club the spirit of jealousy happily operates, and gathers strength by every day's duration.

It is not to be thought that a whole society, who can cordially join in picking holes, according to the old proverb, in their neighbour's clothes, can long refrain from doing as much for one another. Now they begin to meet two and two, according to their various attachments; and those two who happen to meet together, regale themselves with a very pleasant conversation about the faults and weak-

nesses of those who are absent; and thus round the whole society they serve one another. By and by it is whispered what Chloe said at such a place about Phillis; what Lucia said of Arabella, &c., till I blow them all up in a pleasing flame of resentment; and every one says the worst she knows of her neighbour, which commonly is a great deal. Out come personal faults along with family affairs, and a hundred etceteras; and those very ladies sit down, just as the devil would have them, in implacable hatred to each other.

In. I pray, what do you smile at, Avaro?

Av. I was thinking on an encounter I had with the devil Lunatio, whom I accidentally met last night, with his hair standing upright, and his eyes flaming with madness.

Fr. And pray where had that mad-brained devil been? What account could he give of himself?

Av. He was quite snappish with me, and ran on in his discourse as if he had been very angry. "There," said he, "is my father Infidelis, there is uncle Fastosus, they reign uncontrolled over the greatest part of mankind; they are caressed, even adored, by the most respectable characters, both in church and state. You yourself, grovelling as you are, reign an absolute monarch in the wills and affections of many eminent personages; but I am hackneyed by the basest, and when I have done, am denied the honour of my labours, and people are taught to believe that I reign only over the Bedlams, and other mad-houses of the world. Whereas, I could make it appear to all the infernal divan, that there are people who go about at large, and are deemed in their perfect senses, more mad than any in Bedlam."

"Well then," said I, "brother fiend, stop, and give me a sober account of your proceedings; and I assure you I shall give you all due acknowledgments."

Lu. "I have," replied he abruptly, "a great deal of business among statesmen to drive people to their levees, which they dearly love to have crowded, and which never could be without my assistance; for who would attend the levee of my lord Superbo, or of his grace the duke of Parkland, unless he first turned fool? Would any man feed on the promise of a courtier, if he were not mad? The dinner of the

cameleon is as weighty as the promise of the greatest statesman, were it even confirmed by a smile of the countenance and a grasp of the hand; for it all means no more than 'I am glad to see you thicken my levee.' There is never a levee-day but I am obliged to bestir myself to drive the fools together.

"If the premier, or the head man of any department, finds himself on the decline, and that he shall, without some good assistance, he obliged to resign, i. e. be turned out of his place, I am beseeched to procure some verbose, intrepid scribbler, to cry up his abilities and proceedings, as much superior to those of all his predecessors for time immemorial. But a man must first be reduced to a state of lunacy, before he will venture on a work so difficult, and which is likely to be but very ill rewarded. In the first place, he is likely to have truth and fact to overturn, before the end can be obtained, and these you know are stubborn and obstinate. In the second place, if he is happy enough to succeed, and sets down his patron firmly in his chair again, he is soon made to understand that his service has done him little or no good; he is thanked for his good intention, but is given to know, that things would have been just as they are, if no defence at all had been made. If his patron is turned out, the scribbler is blamed for having omitted something which might have been of service, instead of being rewarded for what he has done. So that at all events he must come off loser, and therefore none but a madman will venture on the undertaking.

"The lawyers also would, but for my influences, be obliged to drive teems or follow ploughs; for who but madmen would ever find them employment? But in consequence of their firm attachment to our government, I persuade some to expose themselves, by slowness of payment of their just debts, to the fangs of the lawyers; others to quarrel about trifles, and refer the matter to them for decision. Sometimes I advise a father to leave his daughter under the guardianship of an attorney, or an uncle to leave his estate to his minor nephew, under the care and inspection of a counsellor; either of which is likely to be a lucrative job to the gentlemen of the law. You know very well," continued he, "that none but madmen will ever refer their differences

to the decision of those gentlemen, whilst there are three honest men to be met with in the nation; nor will any man in his right mind ever leave an attorney executor to his will.

"There are abundance of people who live above their revenues, and others still who have abundance, but dare not make use of it, dare scarcely allow themselves the common necessaries of life, for fear of future poverty. I have known a lady of sixty, possest of two or three thousand pounds per annum, actually afraid of dying for want. Those gentry are all under my dominion; besides a very great share of my influence rests on many others, who are grievously oppressed with troubles which never happen; some are so remarkably ingenious as to apprehend difficulties for themselves and offspring, for a great many years to come, as if the evil of the day were not sufficient of itself."

"Stop, Lunatio," said I, "there you touch me sensibly; I will not thus give up my careful subjects." "True," replied he, "but you and I may play into one another's hands. And although I allow them to be yours, it is easy to see abundance of madness in their disposition and conduct. What wisdom, I pray you, is there in any man's burdening himself to day, with what may or may not happen a twelvemonth hence? Less still in pretending to foresee what may happen in future; seeing all future events are locked up in the council of the eternal mind.

"From the thinking and careful people we may descend to the young and frolicsome, who, eager to pry into the cabinet councils of destiny, are duped by daring pretenders to soothsaying and palmistry. As if a designing gipsey, or any other deceiver, could unriddle futurity by the lineature of the hand. There ought to be places provided in Bedlam for all the curious, who cannot be satisfied with knowing the contents of to-day.

"Wisdom will always wish futurity to lie concealed, till occurring events disclose the mysterious page; and moral goodness will never wish to intrude upon the secrets of the Almighty, but rest perfectly satisfied with what is revealed.

"I would also have a place provided, either in Bedlam or St. Luke's, for all who, upon sustaining loss by thieves or otherwise, have recourse to pretended astrologers and reputed conjurers. Every body, besides fools, knows that the stars are dumb, and cannot speak, or that their prophets do

not understand the language of the luminaries. Besides, it has a frantic look to suppose, that honest Jupiter and old crabbed Saturn, with their lucid brethren, have nothing else to do besides standing sentry on this man's horses, that woman's clothes, the other girl's box, or the farmer's orchard. Indeed, if the stars have any other business to attend, besides watching people's moveables, they may happen to be busy when certain robberies are committed, and therefore cannot give such clear accounts of matters as their petitioners might wish for; and I think none but madmen would spend their money upon such uncertainty.

"You are all alike, for laying claim to my subjects, so that I cannot have the honour of my own operations. There is my uncle Fastosus, who will suffer nobody so much as to speak to him, unless he happens to be in the humour. He lays claim to the discontented, whom I could prove by a thousand arguments to be my own disciples. Discontent gives an emphasis to every trouble, and aggravates every pain. Would a wise man then cordially cherish any principle, which is sure to be the bane of his own happiness if cherished? To Bedlam, I say, with all the fretful and discontented. Make haste, provide cells in St. Luke's for all who are uneasy about their countenance, shape, and complexion. A wise man will not be ashamed of external deformity, any more than he will be proud of his comely proportion. And yet Lunatio can have little honour ascribed to him.

"There are people of property who sink their rents, fell their timber, mortgage their estates, in giving grand entertainments to hungry visitants and hangers-on, after the example of Timon of Athens, in order to be thought generous and great; not once considering, that the nearest way to esteem is still to preserve the golden cord in the hand of the owner. Let all be once spent, the insatiable hangers-on who crowd the plenteous table, will drop off like leaves in autumn, and if the wretch retains the loving regard of Argus his dog, he must expect no more. Away with the fool to Bedlam. He ought to go no longer without shackles.

"Parents there are so doatingly fond of their children, that they strip themselves of their possessions, in order to make them respectable in the world, long enough before their own lives are at a period; leaving their future support to

the good nature and mercy of the dear boy or girl, who, it is thought, are so well disposed as to be incapable of ingratitude to those who gave them being. But let the dear boy or girl once get the parents' estate into their power, and they will give them occasion enough to lament their folly, when every shilling received shall come with a very intelligible frown; the language of which to the parent is, 'I wish you were once in your grave.' Such parents ought to be provided for at the public expense, and kept in some place of confinement like other lunatics.

"Other parents, to avoid falling into that error which they foresee may be productive of great personal inconvenience; with an equal degree of madness flee into the opposite extreme. They can find in their hearts to part with nothing whilst they live; they will find some plausible pretext or other, for which they will retain the sole possession of their goods and chattels; rather than give a suitable measure of parental assistance, will suffer the young people to begin the world under all possible disadvantages. Send such parents to Newgate, I say, for they are worse than mad.

"You do me injustice again, Avaro, in claiming the sole power to yourself over parents, who will oppress their servants, over-reach their neighbours, grind the faces of the poor, and sell their souls to the devil, in order to procure fortunes for their children. This is so far from answering the end proposed, in gaining the love and esteem of the young people, that it has quite a contrary tendency. The greater the estate the more impatient will the heir apparent be to be put into quiet possession for himself. The more there is dependant upon the death of a parent, the more eager will children be to have him out of the way. So eager have some been, that they have been obliged to use violence, in order to get the cumbersome old man out of the world. Deliver them up to me, Avaro, for they are all the children of madness. And yet Lunatio is deemed a foolish devil, and a son of idleness.

"You are very prone to ascribe to chance or accident, and other such chimerical gentry-works the honour of which is due only to myself. Ay, you are apt to conclude, that there is even no madness in religion. Pride and covetousness may prevail ever so, but you never think of madness. What less than madness is it to worship a wooden Saviour,

or a Jesus Christ of man's making? To adore a god tha has been baked in an oven; or to pretend to eat the deity I could open such a field before you, as would make you wonder at the aboundings of religious madness.

"Go with me to the chambers of the sick, and see the works of madness there performed. That lady having over-eaten herself at dinner, finding her stomach uneasy, took a glass of brandy to help digestion, after that another, &c. till she is now very ill upon it. The physician is sent for, and after feeling her pulse, asks her a pertinent question or two, as, 'Do you feel an uneasiness at your stomach, madam? Does your head ache, madam? Have you a thirst upon you, madam? You were taken ill after dinner, were you, madam?' He prescribes a gentle purgative draught or two, to assist nature to throw off her load, after having thus learned the cause of her disorder. Now there is an instance of a threefold madness for you. In the first place, although the food was rich and delicious, it was madness to eat after nature said it was enough. Secondly, it was madness to pour such a quantity of strong liquor into a stomach already glutted. And thirdly, it was madness to send for a physician, seeing she would be well enough by to-morrow noon, by which time nature unassisted might have struggled from beneath its burden. Shall I never have due honour paid to my operations.

"This other woman before you, is indeed in a dangerous fever; but she will have no assistance. It is only a deep cold she has caught, and she hopes to get better in a day or two, with care and keeping warm. By and by, when the symptons of death are actually upon her, the physicians must be sent for in all haste.——And when the fever alone is more than nature can sustain, she must have the additional torment of swallowing medicines, even without a possibility of their being of the least service. Is there no madness in this case? Is it not madness to trifle with a disease in its beginning, the only time perhaps in which medicine can afford relief? Is it not equally madness to torment the sick, and throw money away upon the doctor, when the disease is evidently beyond a remedy? And yet you would exclude me from having any share in the vernment of mankind."

"No, Lunatio, returned I, we do not exclude you. We should even be glad to have a full account of your operations in some of our friendly meetings."

Lu. "I could give you such an account as would surprise you all, might the honours due to my operations be properly acknowledged. But I cannot stay now, having urgent business in the west end of a certain metropolis."

"Pray, cousin, may a brother fiend be acquainted with it? said I: he replied, "You know that almost the one half of the nation is in a starving condition, and are as it were on the tip-toe of rebellion; yet in a very great strait how to act. They think it hard to famish amidst plenty; to die of hunger whilst the barns are full of corn, and the pastures are well peopled with cattle; whilst their governors can afford to spend thousands at a horse race, or in an evening's play. On the other hand, they think it hard to be shot at, by those who are murderers by profession; or to be hung up at Tyburn, for seeking to procure bread for their families.

"In this dilemma the poor wretches are raising their voices to government, beseeching their lawgivers to spare so much time from their own pleasure and amusement, as to take their wretched case into serious consideration, that they may not die by artificial famine. What I aim at is, to persuade those in power to treat their complaints with neglect, and themselves as clamourous, uneasy, and turbulent people. Instead of redressing their grievances, to threaten them with the strict execution of the laws against rioters. If I am happy enough to gain this point, as I think I shall, we shall soon see the spirit of madness raving all over the nation, and even the wise will become fools.

"Oppression, you know, will make even a wise man mad. Therefore when their oppressions can no longer be borne, there will go forth a spirit of insurrection among the people; and that shall be followed by a spirit of murder, till all the riots are sufficiently quelled, and the leading insurgents punished by death or transportation. Then will follow a spirit of emigration; and every one almost will wish himself to have been transported at the expense of government. At this very time, there are not less than five hundred thousand families, who are kept in their native country by nothing but the want of means to get cleverly out of it. Neighbouring nations will give all possible encourage-

ment to the poor to settle with them; every opportunity will be taken to cross the Atlantic, till the nation referred to shall become almost, if not quite, depopulated.

"Now the madness of the scheme lies here. The true riches of a nation are its inhabitants, and the grandeur of the great depends wholly on the number of those in inferior stations. In proportion therefore to the oppressions of the poor, will the nation decrease in its strength. Every emigration from the mother country will either increase the number of colonists, or strengthen the hands of natural enemies; of course the neglect of the present complaints will eventually be the entire ruin of the great men themselves, and the translation of the empire to another and very distant seat. Yet after all, perhaps, it will be alleged, that Lunatio hath no influence. But I shall raise myself an immortal name, upon my own foundation. I deign no more converse with a grovelling spirit——adieu."

In. This same Lunatio is a spirit active enough, and we give him due respect; but he is like all his disciples fixed in his own views, and there is no giving him proper ideas of things. I should be glad, Fastosus, to hear more fully what you were saying last night concerning the sadducees, it might be informing to these younger devils.

Fa. You know, sir, they were a set of deists among the Jews, who, like the modern deists, did not believe that there are any angels good or bad, or shall be any resurrection from the dead. I did not only persuade the scribes, pharisees, and doctors of the law, to lay aside judgment, mercy, and the love of God, in order to establish their own traditions: but wrought upon the sadducees to prefer their own reasoning, to the plainest declarations of the word of revelation. I assured them, that the well-informed author of the book of Job was under a delusion, when he said, by the Holy Ghost, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall stand with him at the latter day upon the earth; and although after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in the flesh I shall see God." I persuaded them also, that the prophet Isaiah was under the like mistake, when he foretold that death shall be swallowed up in victory: as also Daniel, who asserted, "that many who then slept in the dust, shall awake; some to everlasting dishonour." These, together with the testimonies of all the prophets, I per-

suaded them to reject, merely because they could not comprehend them, nor account for it how the dead should rise. This, you know, is the very reason why modern deists are pleased, under the same influence, to deny the whole system of revealed truth.

Di. I have often feasted my mind on the pleasing prospect of that amazement and surprise, which shall overtake those infidels, when the avenues of immortality shall open before them; and the terrors of an incarnate, a despised God and Saviour, shall overwhelm them in the floods of horrid despair. Their pretended virtue, their philosophic fortitude, their boasted reason, will fail them, when they see, to their everlasting confusion, that he who despiseth the Son, despiseth also the Father who sent him.

Fa. The deist is my faithful, deluded disciple. Wherever you meet with a man of deistical principles, you will easily discern my image at large on his forehead, and my mark on his right hand. Nothing but pride can induce a man to prefer his own reason to the dictates of sacred Revelation. Fastosus here stopt, and seeming in a terrible agitation, thus addressed his bretheren. "Let us flee, my friends—Let us flee—for yonder comes Michael the archangel, and with him a numerous train, with whom we are not able to contend." They instantly took wing, shot through the yielding air, and I saw them no more. Nor am I certain if I shall ever have an opportunity of listening to their friendly conferences again; but if I should, as is not impossible, the public may expect to hear what passes among them, so far as may come to the knowledge of a sincere friend to mankind,

The Listener.

DEATH:

A VISION;

OR,

THE SOLEMN DEPARTURE

OF

SAINTS AND SINNERS,

REPRESENTED UNDER

THE SIMILITUDE OF A DREAM.

And deliver them, who, through fear of DEATH, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.—*Heb.* ii. 15.

He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second DEATH.—*Rev.* ii. 11.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE favourable reception which DEATH, *a Vision*, has met with by the more pious and thoughtful; and the frequent accounts I have had of its usefulness, especially to the weary and heavy-laden Christian, have induced me to endeavour to make it, as much as possible, still more acceptable, and to print it in a more suitable form for a family book, or pocket companion, as well as greatly to enlarge upon several circumstances therein related.

The subject is of the highest importance. Death casts the die, and unalterably fixes, for ever fixes, our existence, either in a state of the purest holiness and consummate felicity, or in the blackest horror, and most aggravated torments, in the howling regions of infamy and despair. It is of universal concern: all are equally interested in it; for "all must die." This point admits of no controversy; nor can any man appeal from the awful decision. We may in other things, perhaps, allowably differ; but here our judgment must be unanimous, whilst we visit the tombs of our ancestors, and daily tread upon dust once inhabited by immortal spirits. "Your fathers, where are they? The prophets, do they live for ever?" Burying-places discover graves of every dimension, from the infant of a span to the swain of tallest stature. The hoary head, though frequently unnoticed, proclaims aloud the swift approach of Death to venerable age, ripening for the grave by a series of bodily infirmities. The young in years, the bloom of youth, and strength of manhood, in this unequal war, can make no greater resistance than tottering weakness. Almost every day produceth fresh testimony, that youth is by no means an insurance from Death; nor robust and brawny limbs a security from the grave. The greatest monarch comes down here to a perfect equality with the basest beggar; and the most delicate epicurean ranks only with the menial drudge or scullion in the kitchen. Neither robes of the finest lawn, nor crowns of the purest gold, have power to exempt their wearers from the

pains and horrors of a gloomy deathbed, and its inevitable consequences. How awful is this consideration, "God hath appointed that all men once shall die!" Must it not affect the mind to think of entering into an unknown state of existence? A state, of which nothing can in this life be learned but from the word of revelation. And is it not still more awful to see, that notwithstanding the absolute certainty, and the vast importance of Death, the far greatest part of mankind pay little or no regard to its dread solemnity! Men in general will be more curious and exact in their inquiries after even the most trifling commodity they purchase, than about the most suitable preparation for Death. If a tradesman is about purchasing any valuable article, how diligent he is to guard against imposition! If a gentleman purchaseth an estate, how inquisitive is he after its real value, and with what accuracy does he examine the validity of his title! notwithstanding he is to hold it, as it were, only by the hour, or rather by the moment!

Strange it is, but it is true as strange, that the bulk of mankind will take nothing upon trust, except their everlasting concerns. O reader, if thou art one of this thoughtless herd, allow me to tell thee, that thou hast a terrible deathbed, at least a terrible death before thee, which will overtake thee, and will not spare thee one moment, because of thine unpreparedness! No: if thou remainest thoughtless, thou remainest also without excuse; thou hast had, thou still hast, monitors enow. The passing bell, whose doleful sound daily salutes thine ear, calls thee to remember thy mortality; every newspaper that thou readest, by the accounts of death in it, bids thee look forward to another world: yea, every pain, every symptom of disease, summoneth thee to prepare for thy long home. Let no man therefore say, "he had no warning of his mortality;" seeing almost every thing in nature, if duly attended to, proclaims it to thee. Yet man, thoughtless man, goes on under a vain show, and securely pursues earthly objects with as much assiduity, as if Death in reality had no existence, and as if there was not an awful hereafter consequent upon dissolution.

Give me leave to deal plainly with thee for once, my reader,—for God, thy judge, will one day, and that perhaps very soon, be plain; justly and strictly exact with thee,

and with every one; will call thee to a severe account for the thoughtlessness of thy ways; yea, and visit upon thee the sad effects of thine own inconsideration. Tremendous must that audit be, which is unthought of, and for which thou art unprovided; like that man without the wedding garment, the sinner shall remain speechless.

Thou pressest hard after the perishing riches of this world; sometimes successfully, but frequently disappointed. And what if thou couldst amass the wealth of the whole nation to thyself, so that all thy mites should increase to talents! Alas! what would this profit, if thy soul is yet a stranger to that religion which is the only preparative for a happy dissolution! A bed of state will not deter the approach of rude and uncivil disease, nor will embroidered curtains repel the shaft of Death; the silver canopy over the face will not inspire thee with one ray of hope to preserve thee from drooping on the prospect of losing thine all. Couldst thou leave as many millions as thou dost pounds, to surviving years or to charitable uses, it would not, in the least, open upon thy heart the pleasing prospect of divine felicity; nor bribe the fangs of hell from seizing thy despairing spirit; would not even purchase thee a more tolerable station in the mansions of the damned, or one moment's respite from thine unutterable woe. Vain and insignificant wealth can only comfort in health and prosperity; but boasteth not the power of relieving, when in the greatest necessity. Yet how many damn themselves by preferring thee, O delusive wealth, to Jesus and his salvation! O God, open the eyes of blind and thoughtless man, that he may be wise to consider his latter end!

Art thou a man of pleasure, and is thine heart in public places of resort? How unworthy, then, the name of man? How much more excellent are the brutal ranks, which so faithfully answer the several ends of their existence! The very beasts that draw thee to routs and assemblies, and serve to promote thine unmanly dissipation, will bring in their several accusations; and all thine enjoyments will be swift witnesses against thee. Go on in thy life of festivity. Let every day be a renewed carnival; and every returning evening produce some new, some more pleasing revel than the former. Shut out from thine impious heart all thoughts of God, of religion, and holiness; yet know, whoever thou

art, that thou shalt die, and God will bring thee to an account for every moment of time he has allotted thee, and every mercy he has conferred upon thee! If thou livest without God in time, thou shalt also die without him, and be banished from him to eternity.

When Disease shall seize thee, and Death presents his envenomed arrow at thy heart, order thou thy couch to be carried to Vauxhall, Corneilly's, the Pantheon, or some other haunt of pleasure, and try if thou canst die with more composure amongst the shouts of madness and bursts of foolish laughter. Yea, shroud thee in a mask, and thou shalt see that Death, commissioned, shall not miss his aim, but amongst the giddy crowd will select his destined victim, and as soon despatch thee at the Haymarket or Covent-garden, as if secluded in the lonely desert. Shake off all restraints of decorum; cast the admonition of reason behind thee; cease from the reflection, and become the perfect brute; yet shalt thou find that death will present objects to thee which shall demand thy attention, and bring thee to thyself again; for thou canst not fly from his strict researches.

But what shall we do, seeing Death is inevitable? Do! Shake off the sensual brute, and return to the exercise of reason. Remember, that you are endued with intellects capable of reflection; that although you should live brutal lives, you shall not have the privilege of dying like them, but must make your appearance before the eternal God, undergo the scrutiny of infinite Holiness, and be judged according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or evil. If thou never bowedst thy knee to the God that made thee, do it now; and beg of him to teach thee to act becoming a rational being, accountable to thy Maker for all thy procedure. Seek his will in the volume of Revelation; so shalt thou be taught, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, and that there is no holiness but what ariseth from a being born again. Therefore ye must be born again, in order to die happy, and live for ever blessed.——Let whoever pleases laugh at the proposition: their impious sneers will yield to thee no manner of excuse, when God shall demand thy spirit. I therefore take my leave of the thoughtless reader, by leaving this memento with him: "Remember, O man, that thou must and shalt die!"

I shall now beg leave to address you whom God hath made sensible of the necessity of a Saviour, and of the awful importance of an everduring existence.—Great are your privileges! and great your obligations! From Death you have nothing to fear: come when it will, it must come to you in a friendly manner; for it shall go well with them that fear the Lord. Mark; take particular notice of that man whose ways are perfect; whose heart is sincere, and earnestly thirsts after, and strives to attain, that pleasing conformity to the Divine will, from which our first father fell by transgression. Behold the upright, who is the same in his family or closet that you see him in the church assembly. The end, the death, and death-bed of that man, is peace and holy serenity, and calm composure, which neither earth nor hell can disturb. This peace, which accompanies the latter end of the Christian, is the peace of God,—by him bestowed, and by him maintained, and centres in the enjoyment of his sacred presence; and is such a peace as never yet filled the bosom of an unconverted sinner, and therefore absolutely beyond the comprehension of unassisted reason. Life may be gloomy whilst in the tabernacle. The way may be rugged, and the path uneven, so that the weary pilgrim may come halting to his end; but that shall crown the work, and the peaceful end shall eradicate every sensation of former pain: so that your troubles shall be remembered only as waters that have passed away, and all before you will be pleasing and delightful. A few days of adversity will give place to an eternity of pleasure; an eternity of undecaying comfort being for ever behind, and still to be enjoyed. In all your afflictions with which an all-wise God sees meet to exercise you, it will be for your consolation to bear their promised end in view. Even in this life they shall bring forth in you the peaceable fruits of righteousness, whilst they are working out for you, according to the beautiful language of inspiration, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

What a beautiful climax! what an ascent of blessing is here, springing from a source so unpromising! That afflictions which burden us whilst in this tabernacle, should be called light, may to inexperience appear something strange; yet light they are in comparison of the weight of judgment due unto sin's demerit; light in comparison of the

unspeakable sorrows actually sustained by our adorable Lord and Saviour; and light in comparison of that vast weight of glory, which God, our almighty Father, takes occasion by them to work out in our behalf. Nor is it less strange to hear our affliction, which frequently attends us from the cradle to the tomb, represented but as for a moment; yet, when compared with that perpetual felicity so fast approaching, life, though drawn out to the age of Methusalem, sinks into nothing. Yet even this light affliction, which is but for a moment, shall work for us a far—more—exceeding—and eternal weight of glory!—Here is a weight of glory, instead of light afflictions!—a great weight of glory!—a greater weight of glory!—a far greater weight of glory!—far greater than we can ask or think of, or in any way deserve!—a far more greater weight of glory than could ever have been obtained by the most perfect legal obedience!—a far more exceeding greater weight of glory!—and, to crown all,—a far more exceeding greater eternal weight of glory!! To set forth the issue of the saint's afflictions, this elegant apostle has exhausted the power of language. Farther he could not go; eternity must discover the rest. Let patience, then, have its perfect work; and let contentment be the object of your pursuit; it is no matter what bitter ingredients are mingled in your cup: it is the prescription of Infinite Wisdom, and therefore must be salutary.

But death is awful: you know not how to bear the thoughts of dying. Why should the weary have any objection to laying him down to rest? or the hungry beggar to his entering into the banqueting-house? Death is, indeed, a dark and gloomy porch; but it is the gate of thy Father's house: and will not the loving, the longing child, venture through a few moments' gloom in order to get at the dear embrace of a Father so loving and compassionate! You must pass the gate, in order to enter the mansion that so long has waited your arrival; and your Lord, your blessed friend and forerunner, hath taken care to remove out of the way every thing noxious and finally hurtful: he shall vouchsafe his amiable and lovely presence in the mount of straits and valley of thy fears; and shall make thy death perfectly safe and salutary, perhaps even desirable and easy. To the saint of God, for the most part, the bitterness of Death is

past before Death itself arrives; so that upon its arrival, he does not find it to be that terrible and tremendous thing to die which he once apprehended. O my God, vouchsafe me thy sensible presence in my last hours! then shall I esteem my death an inestimable benefit, and my last hours the most precious of my temporal life; and even with my dying breath I will magnify the precious name of Jesus my beloved.

Once more, let me recommend it to you, as you wish to live honourably and to die in comfort, to cultivate those tempers and principles that are likely to have your approbation on a death-bed. I am either greatly mistaken in respect to the nature of Christianity, or some people of eminent rank in the church of Christ must undergo a very great revolution in the temper and disposition of their minds, before they are likely to have a comfortable death: an angry, a revengeful, an implacable temper, very ill agrees with the genius of the Gospel-dispensation, and with our character as followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, who, with his dying breath, cried out, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!" Let this ever be remembered, that it is not a well-informed head, and clear knowledge of Gospel truth, which can diffuse either peace through the heart, or imprint the image of Jesus upon the soul, if a sanctified heart, if heavenly tempers and dispositions of mind are wanting. The one may, indeed, give you the name; but it is the other that gives you the nature of a Christian. It has been a melancholy observation, in which I am afraid there is but too much justice, that some professors, most eminent for Gospel knowledge, are most remarkably deficient in regard to the spirit of Christianity; and think, indeed, that they ought to behave ill to those who are less clear in their doctrinal sentiments, or have the unhappiness to differ from them in some favourite article. But what an unfavourable idea is this likely to give infidels of even the Gospel itself, as they are glad to lay hold of every blemish in the Christian character, and to charge the blessed Gospel with the defects of its abettors! I freely confess, that if I had not been favoured with some acquaintance with the nature, power, and spirit of the Gospel myself, what I have seen of the spirit and conduct of professors, must unavoidably have fixed on my heart an inde-

lible disgust against revealed religion in general; therefore it is easy to account for the unhappy increase of Deists and Freethinkers, so observable in Britain at this period. There is such a thing as saying without doing; as defending the truths of the Gospel in word, and denying them in the spirit of our whole conduct. Ought not, then, every lover of Gospel truth to look well to his spirit and conversation, lest he should effectually injure that blessed Gospel which he desires to promote, and which alone can yield him peace and composure in his dying moments.

There is no way so likely to soften the tempers, and regulate the passions of man, as to cultivate an acquaintance with death-bed solemnities, and strive to keep an approaching eternity in view. It is only in proportion to this, that we can either think or act becoming the Christian. This habit of mind, conversant with eternity, has many peculiar advantages connected with it, and is of the greatest utility in the religious life; such as making afflictions, which otherwise would seem long and severe, to appear what they really are,—but light and momentary,—naturally leads us into such an acquaintance with our own personal weakness, that we can bear with the weaknesses of others, and exercise forbearance even to our greatest enemies; makes the honour of religion, the peace and tranquillity of the church, and the spread of the Redeemer's glory, the first objects of our pursuit; in comparison of which, all other concerns will seem but light and trivial. Besides that familiar acquaintance with it, which in the issue shall make Death itself desirable and easy; which is rarely the case with those who are but little given to bear in mind the solemnities of their dissolution. The pilgrim cannot forget his native country, nor the exile the house of his fathers; how then can it be that the Christian, under the exercise of grace, shall forget the land of his inheritance!

The following little Tract was written within the immediate views of Death, and when eternity made very awful impressions on the heart of the Author. The mode of it was chosen with a view to make it more entertaining, whilst it conveyed the necessary instruction to the mind. The substance of it, notwithstanding, is taken from facts which have fallen under his own observation; and it is hoped,

that, through the divine blessing, the truths conveyed in it will produce their evidence in the believing heart. I trust I can say that I am thankful for the accounts I have had of its usefulness, and bless God that any feeble attempt of mine should be owned to his people's edification. I have taken fresh pains in preparing the eighth edition for the press, and am persuaded that it comes now abroad under greater advantages than in former editions. What alterations I have made, are such as seemed to me calculated to promote its usefulness, and make it more agreeable to the serious reader. I have only to add, that I beg my reader to impute the plainness of speech I have used in the Preface, to a warm desire of seeing the true spirit of religion prevail amongst professors, and to be useful to the souls of my fellow-sinners.

Now that the Holy Ghost may attend the reading of DEATH, *a Vision*, with his special influence, that it may answer the end for which it is now again sent into the world, is, and I trust shall be, the Author's prayer. Amen.

DEATH: A VISION.

PART I.

It was about twelve months ago, that my mind, as is but too frequent with me, void of stability, rambled from one theme to another, and, for a considerable time, continued its vagary to that degree, that I found myself utterly incapable of fixing my attention on any subject that presented itself, however interesting or important it might seem. At last, an awful subject,—Death,—all-conquering Death!—presented itself to me; and that not in a very desirable manner, but in all the deformities of an implacable enemy to nature. This unwelcome though important visitant engrossed my attention in such a manner, that for a fortnight's space I maintained an almost constant intercourse with that awful production of Sin. Throughout the whole length of the day, whether I was in the closet, at the table, or taking a turn on the flowery banks of Severn, my friendly neighbour, I was always employed in viewing the features of his awful countenance, marking, as well as I could, the proportion of his parts, and duly observing his formidable retinue. It was thus I employed myself, whilst the cheering sun illumined our horizon, and nature rejoiced in his genial rays. Nor was I less intent on the awful subject, when silent night spread her sable curtains over the kingdom, and invited the labourer to his refreshing rest; for either my eyes resisted the leaden influence of sleep, or the visiting slumber brought the thoughts of Death along with it. One particular instance of my nocturnal conversation with that universal pillager, I esteem not unworthy of a public hearing; I therefore shall do myself the pleasure of relating it.

It happened one night, after I had been deeply ruminating through the day on that awful subject, that when I was in bed I could not compose myself for several hours

to rest, but numbered the clock from eleven till two; so deep was the impression which the exercise of the day had left upon my mind. Then it was that I felt the power of an alarmed imagination; for in one strain of thought I fancied I beheld the dreadful monster approaching me with his open commission in one hand, and a resistless dart in the other, with which he intended piercing my reluctant heart, and the hated grave, close at his heels, yawning with eager desire for a prey. The man who knows the extent of his own fortitude, and the prowess of Nature's arm, will not brand me with cowardice, though I tell him, that such a striking discovery made my timorous nature shrink, and turn its back on the inflexible enemy:

> Hard work, alas! to join the fray with death,
> Unless defended from his baleful sting.

At another time, I fancied I saw the tyrant in the form of a dragon, wreathing his tremendous bulk beneath the feet of a Glorious Personage, who bore five everflowing wounds, which he received on the day that haughty Death imagined the heavenly country was added to his earthly dominions. Indeed, well might the insatiable tyrant conceive such a presumptuous thought, seeing, strange as it may seem, the Lord, the fountain of life himself, had fallen into his hands; nor did the regardless monster pay the least deference to his immaculate person. But well for man it was, that as the Saviour fell, he seized the king of terrors in his most hideous form, and wrenched from him the fatal sting,—the sad repository of all his strength,—and disabled him of the least hurtfulness to the chosen race. This holy Conqueror, for reasons known to himself, and profitable to us, was pleased to visit the dwellings of the dead; and, for a season, submitted himself to the arrest of Death. But the third blest morning come,—he shook the dust from him,—burst the barriers of the tomb,—forsook the confines of Death; and, in holy triumph, held forth the poisonous sting, and said, *I have overcome* Death, *and him that had the power of* Death!! When I was indulged with this mental vision, I thought that emboldened Nature collected its force, and advanced to gaze on the expiring monster. O! thought I, if I could always view that cruel adversary in his stingless condition, sprawling at the feet of his wonderful Conqueror, I could meet

him with as little fear as a child would sport himself with a harmless lamb. But, alas! I often looked forward with fear, and sometimes with horror, to that momentous period that shall fix, for ever fix, my state of existence in an unaltered station of weal or woe. To be incapable of discerning any thing alluring in life, any thing attractive in this world, and yet to dread a departure from it; to have no satisfying discovery made of that world of spirits where Immanuel reigns in triumph, nor of the safety of the passage from earth to heaven, how dismal the case! how gloomy, how threatening the prospect! As I was meditating on these awful subjects, gentle slumber seized me with its lulling charms, and soon wafted me into the arms of downy sleep, where I lay the rest of the night, inactive in body, Death having imprinted his image upon me.

In the meanwhile, the more vigilant mind, after her usual manner, rambled abroad through unmeasured space. Mounted on agile fancy, she soon explored the vast meridian from pole to pole; then changing her course, she winged her flight across the countries, from the eastern depth to the occidental shore; and, in its rapid journey, my fruitful fancy lined out a numerous train of visionary objects; so that now I had work enough cut out for the residue of the night, in turning over these phantoms of the mind.

I dreamed, that in one place I beheld the most beautiful garden that ever I had seen represented by any type or print whatsoever, and which I presume could be equalled only by Eden in its original beauty. In the midst of this delightful garden arose a fountain, not of water, but of a slimy substance, bearing something of the resemblance of boiling pitch. I thought that the fountain flowed apace, and sent forth innumerable streams to every quarter of the globe, in such plenty, that it diffused itself abroad through every corner of the land, insomuch that every inhabitant was less or more debauched with the polluting matter. Gentleman in scarlet and lace, ladies adorned with silver and gold brocades, I beheld smeared with the filth of the fountain. From the high possessor of the royal chair, down to the despised Lazarus, all were polluted, though many of them perceived not the stain. Many of those streams joining in one, composed a river of a prodigious force, which passed through a spacious plain; and multi-

tudes of people of both sexes, high and low, rich and poor, of all denominations and persuasions, young and old, I saw rolling in the filthiness of the stream. Some swimming, others wading; some faster, others slower, down the noisome channel; some sipping, others lapping the foam of the unnatural billows; but all going along with the stream, which, I perceived, disembogued itself on the other side of this world, in "a lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched."

In another place, I saw an infinite number of people, old and young, rich and poor: some decked with ornamental embroideries, rich brocades, delightful damasks, &c.; others hardly covered with deforming rags; some with their coaches, landaus, &c., attended with a numerous retinue; some on horseback, following a pack of hounds; others running on foot; but all pursuing the same chase. This promiscuous body, as I thought, formed itself into a circle of a wide diameter, around the mouth of a dreadful volcano. Every member of the mixed multitude held an uninterrupted pursuit around the ring. Those who rode in coaches, chariots, and landaus, went foremost in the mad procession; those who strode the martial horse, were next unto them; and the poorer sort, who trampled on foot, hied after as fast as they could. When I beheld the ardour of the crowd, I could not help admiring what valuable prize it might be, which prompted them to run with such alacrity, and that even within the views of danger; till at length I espied what are commonly called the pleasures of the flesh, transformed into immaterial butterflies, a cloud of which cut their uneven flight around the above-named circle, and danced as wantons within a very small distance of the first rank of the pursuers; and many of them as straggling flies, mixed themselves with the various ranks of the fag-end of the multitude: and all the crowd, as I thought, were intent on catching the giddy flies, ever hoping and ever disappointed.

Sometimes the pursuers got within arm's-length of the leading flies; then they snatched with eager grasp, nothing doubting but the long-sought prize at last was won. But O the power of deceit! As soon as the enthusiast opened his hand, he saw, with grief, that the fly had eluded his

diligence, however often it fluttered near him. Thus disappointed, they doubled their efforts, and increased their speed, in order to accomplish the desired end; but this, notwithstanding all their endeavours, I conceived to be impracticable: for although the butterflies always kept in view, so subtle were they, they never could be caught; and yet so alluring was their mazy dance, that the mad pursuers, prompted with hope of attaining, could not be prevailed with to desert the chase, although at every turn one or more of the company fell into the pit from whence there is no redemption. But as the volcano in the centre received those whose race was run, others from the outside joined the ranks, and filled up the place of the persons lost. And thus it was at every turn; for they were always drawing nearer and nearer to the pit, and thus they continued as long as I beheld them.

In the third place, I saw, in a spacious field, a prodigious number of people, mostly old, or middle-aged, extremely busy, and working upon their hands and knees, for whom I was touched with the tenderest emotions of pity, looking upon them to be in a state of the most abject slavery; but could not, for a time, comprehend the nature of their servitude, being altogether unacquainted with so strange a sort of labour. Their actions seemed much to resemble those of a mole, for their hands and feet, and every other organ, were closely employed; but their heads, their plodding heads, were principally concerned in the work: and what before I took to be such servile drudgery, I soon learned to be their chief, if not their only pleasure. O! with what alacrity did they rout with their heads, mole-like, in the earth, in quest of somewhat! but what it was I could not at first comprehend, till after lending a close attention for some time to their motions, I perceived them to pick up certain particles of yellow dust, with somewhat of a brilliant gloss; which, as soon as found, they kissed, and hid in a cavern very near the heart. Many of those diligent gentry I saw fall prostrate before the refulgent heap, and thus addressed it: "Gold! adorable gold! thou blessed effect of mine own industry! be thou ever preserved safe in my possession; and I desire no other good, no other blessing, but thee! Increase, O increase upon me! for thou answerest all things; and I can be

happy only in the possession of thee! Avaunt, every pilfering rogue! ye poor and needy, keep for ever at a distance from my dwelling, and reap the reward of your slothfulness! And, O my gold! continue to rest in these blessed coffers; blessed only by thy presence! Instead of roving, ever here take up thy abode; for I vow, that my morning homage, and evening adoration, shall be paid to none but thee!" I saw, as I thought, some of them rout a whole summer's day, and prove very unsuccessful, finding few or none of these shining particles of dust: others were more successful; and, every time they dived into the earth, brought forth, some less, others more, of the fulgent clay, and disposed of it so as to endue it with such a generative quality, as annually to beget and bring forth more of its own species. Others I saw who routed long and sore; but no increase ensuing, they fell into a visible discontent, and cursed the partial earth, which bestowed her favours on others, as they thought less worthy than themselves. Some there were who toiled long, and were very successful in the routing way, having heaped much of that precious dust together; but to their lasting mortification, some cunning neighbour, by a most masterly artifice, got beyond and robbed them of the adored metal. Others diligently routed both night and day in the earth, and with the utmost care disposed of their increase in some place of safety; but in despite of all their industry and care, they were mortified to the last degree, when they perceived their own children, who played about their knees, and whom they loved above all things next to their gold, had been more dexterous in scattering the heaps abroad, than they themselves in collecting them. Likewise some were there, who by long and incessant fatigue, had the pleasure of gathering much of this yellow dust together; but ere they were aware, whilst standing in an adoring posture before it, suddenly sunk into the earth, and I saw them no more: but where they went to take their abode, I do not at present determine; only this I saw, their memory was soon forgotten, and the next heir reaped the fruit of their industry. Others there were, who with indefatigable diligence had got almost enough of this brilliant dust; but ere the fool considered that it was perishable, he had the unspeakable grief of seeing it all swept away by some shower, or burned up by some flash of light-

ning, sent on purpose by the angry Heavens: on which disaster some of them became quite disconsolate, and went mourning even to the grave. Others, of more heroic fortitude, having sustained loss, immediately clapped down on their hands and knees, and went to work with their heads in the earth, and routed with double diligence, resolving by all means, just or unjust, to repair their ruined heaps. Having had a full view of this routing brotherhood, I could not forbear thinking, that a people so very near resembling the mole in its dispositions and actions, might, with a good deal of propriety, be named Human Moles.

But tired with beholding the paltry actions of this grovelling society, I thought I bent my course to another domain, where I saw a lofty tower, the top of which transcended the hoary clouds, for aught I know, as far as they are higher than the earth; perhaps many times as far. The tower was built in a pyramidical form, divided into great variety of stories, with a kind of winding way on the outside, which lead from one story to another; and you must think that a very dangerous way it seemed, seeing it had no battlements to guard its ascendants. On every story were built certain pinnacles, or small towers, beautifully adorned with garlands of flowers, plumes of feathers, titles of state, names of honour, &c. and on the top of the tower was a figure of clay, overlaid with the appearance of gold. This image was formed in the shape of a woman,—beautiful at first sight, but whose features appeared grosser the longer you looked at her. She seemed to be crowned with gold, adorned with sparkling diamonds, and a zone studded with precious stones begirt her swelling loins; over her head was raised an azure canopy, embroidered with the finest gold. In one hand she held titles and names; in the other, a regal sceptre; and, in an inviting posture, she stood on a marble pedestal, with this alluring motto wrote on her escutcheon: "The valiant hero who hath courage enough to climb up to me, shall enjoy me." O what bustle was here among people of all ranks! striving who could soonest ascend the sides of the tower; each striving to possess himself of some place of eminence, without considering the dangers to which they were exposed by their aspiration! Often have I seen the contention of the turf but never did I see such jockeying as was here; scarcely

any thing but jostling and crossing the way, was to be seen amongst them. When one was ascended a few steps above the vulgar level, and fancied himself secure of a place of eminence, another, prompted thereto by envy, or some other principle equally vicious, came up to him, tripped up his heels, and precipitated him into the moat which surrounded the tower; for it ought to be observed, that this tower was surrounded by a horrible puddle, into which many of those who sought to ascend, were plunged with violence, before they knew themselves to be in danger, either by the jockeying of their opponents, or even when seated upon the long-desired pinnacle, by some eddy gust bursting from the bosom of the tower, and precipitating them lower than they had been before. However, some few there were, who, with indefatigable diligence, attained almost the top of the tower, and on the spiral point of the pinnacles they swaggered with waving arms, and in a contemptuous manner looked on the gazing crowd that stood below, eager beyond measure to obtain a smile of their lordships. Herein, however, I thought the crowd was greatly disappointed; for no sooner were any of these gentry put in possession of a pinnacle, but instantly they drank of the obliviating waters of Lethe, and totally forgot the men upon whose shoulders they climbed to those seats of eminence. Nevertheless, so deeply infatuated were those who stood below, that they not only worshipped the grandeur which they themselves had put upon them, but stretched their expectation beyond imagination, of receiving some convincing proof of their gratitude. But former depressions utterly forgot, the worthy gentlemen dwelt in their secure pomp, till, in an unhappy hour, a ruffling blast burst swiftly upon them, and furiously whirled them from their seats of honour.

Some two or three ascended even to the marble pedestal, where they sat, adorned with plumes of feathers, but could hardly be seen of the populace below. One thing concerning them I could not but think remarkable: sometimes they appeared like a lamb; then like a lion or a bear: and if at any time the wind beat high upon them, they transformed themselves into a willow, and bended beneath the blast; otherwise into a stream, and thus eluded the iron hand of danger: and when the storm was over, they ap-

peared like themselves again; and the haughty madam looked down upon them with a smile of complacency.

But of all the multitude, there was only one who sat immediately at her feet, in a royal chair; upon whose head she rested her hand, and owned him her darling son. This favourite was a blooming majestic youth, in whose countenance was to be seen wisdom and magnanimity written in legible characters; and, with deportment altogether different from those who sat near him, he looked down with an air of affection upon all the ranks below him.

But strange as it may seem, this worthy personage, notwithstanding his merit and elevated station, did not appear to be the most happy man in the world; for it was not difficult to see anxious cares, and perplexing fears, crawling, as so many snakes, round the seat of majesty. I thought then, that surely the higher a man is in station, he is the more emphatically wretched, unless he can hug the servile chain like the mutable sons of Proteus, or has learned to live above the caprice of fortune. I thought in my dream, that by what means soever any pinnacle threw its rider, or however dirty his fall might be, that no sooner was the place proclaimed empty, than numbers strove who should first vault into it. Here I saw a curate aiming at a vicarage, a vicar at a bishopric, and a bishop striving for an archiepiscopal see. Here I saw a valet aspiring to the fine gentleman, a baronet aiming at an earldom, and a country squire coveting the direction of the nation. Here I saw also a private sentinel aiming at a halberd, a halberdier at a captain's place, a captain earnestly suing for a regiment, and Prude, my lady's woman, affecting the name of madam.—For my own part, when I saw the follies of mankind, I could not help wishing that they were again blessed with the right use of their reason.

At last, more staid, I found myself in the middle of a spacious field, decorated with all the variety of nature in bloom: the freshest verdancy was the velvet-like ground work, embroidered with a richer variety of perfect colour than ever the delicate pencil of Apelles left on the stained canvass. I walked along, admiring its beauties, ravished with the fragrancy of the full-blown flowers, which and Oriental gems richly decorated the enamelled plain. Here I beheld the glory of the divine Creator, sparkling in every

verdant pile which decked the spreading lawn, in such a manner, that seeing could not satisfy the eye: nor was my ravished ear less delighted with the tuneful voice of the early lark, as ascending she sung morning anthems to her Almighty Preserver. Like masters of music, equally fired with a sense of gratitude, the blackbird and thrush, emulous of song, poured their flowing harmony abroad through the vault of ether, as if scorning to be outdone in praise to their common Parent. Pleased to see the spangled field join in concert with the feathered songsters, who sent forth their chirping melody from the flowery hedges; the one cheerfully singing, the other sweetly smiling, the great Creator's praise; "O man!" said I, "lord of this lower creation, what blessings dost thou enjoy beyond the most extensive privileges of all thy neighbours, the inhabitants of air, earth, and water! Conscience, reason, and understanding; an erect posture of body; sole dominion over all the numberless ranks of creatures, animate and inanimate, which possess this earthly globe; they are all thine by divine donation! they all were made for thine enjoyment! such are thine invalued privileges, joined with an ever-during existence, and a capacity fitted for the possessing of an Infinite Good!"

These are blessings peculiar to the state of favoured man, and for which only depraved man is capable of being unthankful. But, oh! let humanity blush at the awful consideration! notwithstanding all our enjoyments, we, only we men are idle, when universal nature joins in general concert to speak the great Creator's praise! Ingrateful man! shall the sun, the moon, and stars, with all the hosts of heaven, unceasing move in general concord, and harmoniously shew forth the praises of God! Must the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, and all the inhabitants of the waters, be concerned in the enchantment of his manifest glories; and thou, above all others most beloved, and most indulged, alone remain dumb in the general concert; worse than dumb, even refractory! The horse, that now glories to prance under thy weight; the vine, which bleeds to satiate thine intemperance; the people of the feathered nations, whose little carcases must now indulge thy gluttony, will one day severally appear as the swiftest witnesses against thee. Thou ingrateful abuser of many blessings!

what will become of thee when thy soul is demanded? How wilt thou stand before an infinitely holy God? Dreadful thine account! for God is just as well as beneficent.

I thought in my dream, that as I was thus ruminating, I was greatly surprised, by seeing the monster Death enter the field, through a breach which Sin had made in its fences. He appeared at first in the form of a skeleton, with quiver and darts, as he is usually drawn. The most barbarous rage and inflexible cruelty sat brooding over his hollow eyes, whilst his unseemly fingers grasped the irresistible scythe: the mattock and spade wrought in a field of corruption, with the resemblance of empty shades frisking over it, was the skeleton's flag. Close behind him, almost treading on his heels, followed a lean, ill-looking figure, with extended jaws; at the sight of which my blood chilled in my veins, and my flesh shuddered with perfect aversion. Nor was this aversion peculiar to me, for I perceived that all Nature seemed to fly from its presence; and, indeed, well might Nature tremble at the thoughts of an encounter, for the same hunger-bitten follower of Death cast a languishing look on every object, and yawned with desire to devour it.

I thought that Death was no sooner entered the field, than this meagre and greedy attendant addressed himself to him in a craving manner, crying—"Give! give!" on which the cruel skeleton brandished his shafts, and fiercely threw from his unerring hand, first at one, then at another object, till whole nations fell almost at once beneath his fatal javelin. One instance, in particular, I saw, of a whole generation being swept away by one stroke of his scythe. Such was the amazing power he had obtained from complicated Sin, that all, especially mankind, fell at the first touch of the destructive dart! and as soon as fallen, this detested monster licked them up, and the world saw them no more for ever! Here I saw, that this grand devourer made no distinction between this and that, but fed with as much delight on the flesh of a beggar, as on that of princes and nobles: the celebrated beauty, and the youthful hero, afforded no greater relish to the hungry grave, than the country landlady, or rustic swain: old and young, beauteous and unseemly, rich and poor, noble and ignoble, were confusedly jumbled together in its insatiable entrails.

At a very small distance from this king of terrors, followed a tall, upright personage, of the exactest symmetry in all her parts; her mien was noble, and all her gesture uniform. This royal and majestic person sat on a seat of right judgment, held a pair of equal balances in her hand, and had for her motto, "I judge according to every man's works." I thought that this upright lady, who was in herself the most perfect beauty, invested Death with dreadful array, and equipped him in most of his terrors; as every human creature who fell a prey to the ravager, was immediately weighed in her impartial balances. "O!" said I, on seeing the procession, "if weighed in these equal and impartial balances, who is he that shall not be found wanting!"

Last of all, in the train of the skeleton, followed a monster of devilish birth, and of such a form as I had never seen before: it kept its eye, as I thought, continually fixed on the upright lady, whose name was Justice, making inquisition for blood To this monster was given every person whose actions did not weigh according to the rules of the sanctuary; and they were all stored in its incorrupting bowels. What was very strange, notwithstanding all the persons given to this insatiable monster remained entire within it, it continued as solicitous for more, as it was the first moment of its being. Then I thought of that saying, Death and Hell are never satisfied.

I stood a considerable time, admiring the strangeness of the scene, and soon I discovered something more; for Death metamorphosed himself into a dragon of an enormous size, and approached near the place where I had taken my standing for observation. Fearful lest I should be the prey at which he aimed, I began to think of methods of resistance, as I could not reconcile myself to the thoughts of the grave; nor was I certified at that time, that I should escape hell, if he seized me. Up he came within a very little distance of me, which greatly roused my apprehensions of danger: but, to my unspeakable joy, he turned off to the left, followed by his dreadful retinue; and, turning my eye to that side of the field, I soon discovered the prey at which he aimed. A beauteous lady, in all the grandeur of life, decked with the richest silks, adorned with gold, pearls, and precious stones, attended by a numerous train of obedient servants, she herself glistening like a goddess in the

midst of them: every attendant carefully observed the glance of her eye, the wave of her hand, or the nod of her head, having learned by these signs to read her ladyship's pleasure.

At first, I was much amazed to see this jovial company altogether unapprehensive of danger; none of them seemed to regard the monster's approach, but maintained their jollity with as much delight as if Death had never been born. Touched with pity, I waved my hand to awake their attention, and entreated them to beware of yonder dragon; but at that instant I beheld a god, who is said to be president over this world, raise a dust, and spread a mist before their eyes, so that they could not discern the paths of the destroyer; therefore they rejected my admonitions, scorned my fervour, and bid me begone for a prating fool. But, seeing their imminent danger, and moved with concern for them, I disregarded their clamorous speeches, hardened my countenance against shame, and lifted up my voice higher and higher, using many arguments to persuade them that the monster Death was even then at hand, to devour one or more of them; but all in vain! for they would receive none of my admonitions, and mocked at my zealous concern. At last, unhappy moment! the inexorable tyrant came up with them, and with his forked talons seized my lady in the midst of her jocularity. But O, how would it have shocked you, to see the consternation she was in when she first perceived herself envenomed by his poisonous sting! Convinced that her time in this world was just at an end, and to the last degree unwilling to venture into a new state of existence, so much unknown to the best of men, and the dread of those who are ignorant of God, O, what would she not have given for a short reprieve! Never did criminal at the bar endure such horror when the awful judge denounced the tremendous sentence, as this wretched lady felt on the dismal prospect of futurity! If gold and silver could have redeemed her from Death, she would freely have given as much as would build a cathedral, parted with her attendants and finery, and lived in adversity the residue of her days; or if she might have been exempted from the dreadful encounter, she would even have given up the beloved pleasure of plays, operas, and dancing-assemblies. But, alas! no bribe, nor promise of

future amendment, could turn aside the resistless arrow' or procure the once gay delinquent the shortest respite.

She implored the aid of her skilful physician, attended by the faithful apothecary; yea, a whole troop of the faculty were summoned to exercise all their wisdom, by any means to resist the rapacity of the inexorable tyrant; but all in vain! for sad experience proved, that no medicine, however skilfully prepared, is a sufficient antidote against the poison of Death's cankered sting; therefore the lady, however reluctant, was forced to submit to the monarch of terrors.

Lest the length of my dream should render it tedious to my readers, if told at once, I shall divide it into several parts, and shall stop here for the first time.

PART II.

Having had a full view of all that passed betwixt Death and the lady, I could not forbear reflecting on the folly of inconsiderate mortals, who are every hour, for aught they know, exposed to Death; and yet live altogether strangers to a certain, an approaching eternity. It is awful, indeed, to banish the thoughts of futurity from the mind, and assiduously bury every serious reflection in the moat of sensuality; to rush from one profane delight to another, till unwelcome Death puts an end to our career, and serves us as he did the unhappy lady. O, what profit is there, said I, in separating less or more time every day, for intimate fellowship with Death! In all probability, when grace is given so to do, our conflict with that merciless tyrant is far from being so terribly dreadful. It is true, I profess but a very small acquaintance with men and things; yet I cannot but conjecture, that one reason why this lady and her acquaintance so utterly detested discourses concerning Death, might be, because such discourses naturally tend to strip the pleasures of the flesh of all their imaginary charms. Then said I again, O blessed, discriminately blessed of the Lord are they, whose exalted pleasures can consist with the most intimate acquaintance and fellowship with Death! They, and only they, are fit to enter the lists with that formidable enemy, who can in life maintain converse with him, without spoiling the pleasure of the day.

I thought in my dream, that Death, having finished his business with madam, transformed himself from the appearance of a dragon into the likeness of a grave and not uncomely personage, clothed in a long flowing white robe, which hid all his native deformities. Thus equipped, he directed his course towards me, which once again put me in a panic lest I should be the destined prey, notwithstanding he was not now so terrible as before; but as the all-directing Power ordained it, he passed by me, his route lying now to the right. My attention being wholly engrossed by the achievements of that terrible hero, I turned my eye after him, and at no great distance beheld a man of a middle age, and an upright mien, to whom he marched with all possible speed. No sooner was this good man apprized of his approach, than with a becoming serenity of countenance he went forth to meet him, and thus addressed him: "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, for I long to be dissolved, that my better part may appear in the more immediate presence of thy Conqueror!" Death replied, "Thou guarded one, all I have to do with thee, is to sign thy dismission from this stage of action, and open thy passage to the land of immortal felicity." He said, and instantly pierced his heart with an arrow dipped in the blood of Immanuel: and as soon as the venerable man felt the arrow rankling in his bosom, in holy triumph, he cried, "O Death! where is thy sting? and where is thy victory, O desired grave? Thanks, eternal thanks, be to God, who hath given me, even me, the victory through my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!"

Is this Death? said I: Death, who of late was so cruel, when he had to deal with a person of a different turn of mind. Call him no more the monarch of terrors! Yes, I will still give him that name, for it is essential to his very nature. If at any time, to any one he be propitious and gentle, impute it not to any compassion in him, but to the blood, the precious, the atoning blood of the Redeemer; that blood, whose attractive virtue has drawn the poison even from the king of terrors; malignant to all, save those whose hearts and consciences by the divine Spirit are sprinkled therewith.

However, I could not help thinking, that there was something in the case of this good man, as remarkably to

be desired, as that of the lady was dreadful; and I could then say with Balaam (I trust from a better spirit), "Let me die the death of the righteous, and my latter end be like his."

Death, having released from the clayey tabernacle the waiting spirit of this sanctified disciple, changed himself a second time into the appearance of a dragon, whetted his sting, and put on all his formidable terrors; in which equipment he bent his course towards a magnificent palace, which stood at some distance on a delightful plain. With timorous heart and careful steps, I followed as near as I might with safety, and attentively watched, to see what the next execution would be. At this time there happened to be a ball or dancing-assembly in the palace; an assembly of people, from whom every serious thought was banished, and who were wholly devoted to voluptuousness and dissipation. As these people of pleasure intently pursued, with jovial glee, the musical mazes of the dance, invisible Death stole in amongst, and grinned ghastly upon them; but, inattentive to the enemy's approach, they persevered in their jocularity, till he cruelly pierced the hearts of two of the company, in whom the injected venom rankled, so as to prevent their enjoying a future merry meeting. I trembled with fear, lest the rest of the company should be taken; but afterwards understood that Death, rapacious as he is, always narrowly mindeth the contents of his commission, without which he never appears on our mundane coast; but carries it along with him wherever he goes, and never seizeth any but those whose names and places of abode are specified therein: so that he is liable to no mistake, as he is falsely charged with in the case of the two Ireneuses.

I was not a little diverted at the conduct of some people, whom I heard crying out for Death, seemingly in good earnest, saying, "Where is propitious Death? O that I knew where I could find him!" but as soon as the terrible skeleton presented himself, they fled for refuge to the doctor's embrace. Others really amazed me; for they hunted through the field in a silent pursuit of Death, and as soon as they beheld him, plunged themselves into his devouring jaws.

Many such instances I saw, but must at present forbear relating them, lest the length of my dream should give

occasion to people of a censorious spirit, to charge me with oversleeping my time: but what I saw, filled me with uncommon concern for my fellow-creatures who are under the arrest of Death before they are aware—hurried from the stage of action, before they well know themselves to be mortal. Grieved to see the thoughtless stupidity of blinded mortals, and the unretarded havoc made of them by merciless Death, I cried out, in bitterness of soul, "O that they were wise, and understood this! O that they would consider their latter end!"

As I was thus breathing forth desires after the happiness of my contemporaries, a venerable personage approached, and accosted me thus: "Young man, I perceive that the visible destruction brought upon mankind, hath filled your heart with honest concern: you mourn to them, but they will not lament; you pipe unto them, but they will not dance: rather for your pains they will laugh you to scorn, and bait you under the ridiculous name of fanatic. Mankind, prone to sensual pleasures, and enslaved to fleshly lusts, will not, cannot bear your serious admonitions: but if you please to go along with me, I will shew you somewhat of the various forms of death, as it is met with by saints and sinners; which discovery, if attended with the divine blessing, may be of great advantage to you all the days of your life."

Being naturally of an inquisitive mind, I readily embraced the offered favour, gratefully thanked the gentleman, and pleased myself with hopes of seeing much of the monster Death, with whom I expected, ere long, in cruel conflict to encounter.—"But, dear sir," said I, "before we depart hence, let me beg to be acquainted with the story of yonder lady, who was so rudely served by the merciless tyrant." "The lady," said he, "after whom you inquire, was named Teresa, the only daughter of a wealthy gentleman and lady in the neighbourhood. She was blessed with a person peculiarly elegant and pleasing; her countenance displayed the most agreeable softness, and her snowy skin even vied with the feathers of the swan for whiteness; her shape was faultless in the eye of the most discerning, in every part finished with the most perfect symmetry.

"Thus accomplished, she was taught, from her cradle, to value herself upon her beauty and gentility; and her fond

and foolish parents soothed her vanity, by all that their dotage could contrive: no care nor expense was thought too much to render her education perfectly polite, and to set off the graces of her frame to the best advantage; but little or no care was taken to improve the infinitely more valuable soul.

"Her taste for dress was so remarkably elegant; her manner of dancing so particularly genteel; such was her great dexterity at cards; and so singularly happy was she in devising schemes, and forming parties of pleasure, that she became the most celebrated toast of the day. Thus she lived, ravished with false pleasures, and dead to every serious and divine principle, till Death seized her unawares, and hurried her off from all her delights into a dreadful and unthought-of eternity, where we leave her in a state for ever unalterable, and go over to yonder building, to see what may be learned there."

This said, he conducted me through the spacious meadow, towards a magnificent building of the most curious architecture, erected on four rows of columns, partly of the Corinthian, and partly of the Ionic order, in one corner of the enamelled plain; which place we entered without formality, my guide leading the way. He was now pleased to take me by the hand, and lead me into a chamber where were several persons of both sexes, attending a sick man who lay in dreadful distress on a bed of sorrow: he was, to all appearance, very near the expiring moment: every one waited for the last convulsive throe. My guide having, by some wisdom peculiar to himself, rendered us both invisible; unperceived either by him or his attendants, we went up close to his bedside. He started—he stared;—and his eyes rolled most frightfully in his head, as if they had followed some terrible apparition, suddenly traversing the room: then he was seized with convulsive agonies, which distorted every one of his feeble organs. In this strange confusion of mind and awful distress of body, he vehemently struck with both hands and feet, as if environed with deathly enemies, from whom he desired an asylum of safety, and with an eye sanguine beyond conception, he looked on those who attended at his bedside, as if he would have said, "O that you could help me now in my last difficulties! Ye were the companions and assistants of my

former pleasures; but now, alas! ye intermeddle not with my pain. The redemption of the soul is precious, and ceaseth for ever. O that I had been strangled in the birth, or dropped into the grave from my mother's breast, before I had begun my life of rebellion!"

I thought in my dream, that a neighbouring minister came in, with a design to assist the dying man in his last extremity: he prayed for, and would have conversed with him, but all to no purpose, for the distressed delinquent continued in growing anguish, and could not endure either his prayers or conversation. The mourning relations procured what assistance could be had from the faculty, by all possible means to prevent the success of the ghastly destroyer: but, alas! his disease was beyond the power of physic to suppress. His trembling heart beat thick with horror, and found not room sufficient for fair play in his roomy chest, whilst the rank venom of the deadly fever shot through his bowels like a burning arrow, and drank up the streams of life: yet still studious for his relief, they poured the physic into his tormented body, which only served to augment his pain. "Ah!" said I, "how feeble are all our friendly efforts, when our unhappy acquaintance has to do with Death! Alas! what avails it to possess strong and brawny limbs, or square and well-built shoulders, seeing a fit of common sickness debilitates the most robust! O, may my glorying be founded on that which neither sickness nor Death can destroy!" I was deeply affected with this melancholy spectacle: his tender wife and other dear relatives stood round his bed, bedewing it with floods of tears; whilst, mad with despair, he tugs eagerly for life, and in dying rage clinches what comes next to hand. O my soul! sure it is a solemn thing to die! and, O tremendous! to die in despair, how dreadful! Even his little children forgot to play, and learned to be serious. In a chamber adjacent to that of their dying father, they looked wistfully on each other, and gave vent to their infant sorrows. I could not stand the mournful sight without mingling my tears with theirs. My guide, perceiving the impression which the affecting scene had made upon me, rebuked my want of resolution, in being so much depressed before one-half of the scene was unfolded; and I, sensible of my defect, submissively yielded to the reproof

of my wise superior. I thought that, pleased with my submission, he opened a box of invaluable ointment, and therewith anointed my eyes, whereby they were so much strengthened, that I could readily see things which in themselves are altogether invisible to the unassisted natural eye. Then it was I soon perceived, that those convulsive pangs, distorted features, rolling eyes, wild and distracted looks, &c. were not merely the effects of nature struggling with the growing disease, but proceeded mostly from a mental cause. A fearful avenue was opened before him, leading into a dreadful eternity; at the not far distant end of which avenue, he beheld the tremendous reward of all his ungodliness! This, this it was which caused such perturbation in his distracted mind; this it was which made Death so terribly dreadful to him; and this it is which affecteth my mind, now I relate the story.

Nature, utterly reluctant to be dissolved, exerted her strongest powers, and made her utmost efforts to preserve the union betwixt soul and body inviolate. The alarmed soul, having so undesirable a prospect before her, shrunk down into the lowest caverns of the heart, as it were to hide herself from the researches of Death, which she saw approaching to dislodge her, and joined issue with shocked Nature, to repel the power of the fierce destroyer. But soon, very soon, enfeebled Nature, having exhausted her strength, swooned into helpless inactivity; then the frightened soul, finding herself deserted by her weak ally, seemed half persuaded to yield the debate. Then she quitted her interior lurking-places, and, quaking as she passed through the lanes of life, ascended to the pale quivering lips, where she sat astonished at the dire event. I thought then of the propriety of those verses of the celebrated Dr. Watts:

Death! 'tis a melancholy day
  To those that have no God:
When the poor soul is forc'd away,
  To seek her last abode.
In vain to heav'n she lifts her eyes;
  But guilt, a heavy chain,
Still drags her downward from the skies,
  To darkness, fire, and pain!

Dread amazement seized her, when she beheld lurking in the chamber a train of ghastly furies waiting to carry her thence. Precipitately back she fled, resumed her possession of the interior regions, roused up the residue of nature,

fled to every avenue, and wildly shrieked for help: but all in vain her unequal resistance; for Death, like a staunch murderer, stood firm to his purpose, and closely pursued her through all the lanes of life, till he drove her out of the confines of mortality: at last the fatal moment came, vanquished Nature laid down her arms, the weary heart forbore to throb, and Death displayed the trophies of victory all around!

Death having broke through all the redoubts of desolated Nature, the dismayed ghost, now forced forth from her wonted dwelling, remained in a defenceless condition, exposed to the insults of merciless fiends, destitute of an asylum. Unhappy spectre! as soon as she arrived at the pale portal of the lifeless lips, she began to seek for a place of refuge: she looked up towards heaven; but dreadful was the prospect, for she beheld an incensed God loosing his engines, and beginning to play his flaming indignation upon her! To shun this inevitable evil, she looked downward; but equally terrible was her prospect there: with consummate horror she beheld the yawning jaws of intolerable hell extended wide to receive her! There being now no flying from the environing evils, the swift messengers of destruction seized, shouldered, and bore her away, to appear before the judgment-seat of injured and incensed justice, where she received the fearful, the irrevocable sentence, "Depart from me, thou cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" But, oh! no tongue can express, no heart can conceive, her struggles and shriekings, when she first felt the tormenting touch of the intolerable talons of hell! her lamentations ascended even to the relentless throne of God.

I thought in my dream, that by this time, I was almost dead with surprise and fear; but my benevolent guide imparted to me a cordial, in my esteem infinitely more valuable than all the wealth of the Indies, by which I was much refreshed, and after some time I addressed him thus:

"Oh, Sir, what have I heard! what have I seen! Surely this man must have been some vile, notoriously wicked, and uncommon sinner, which makes his latter end so terrible."

To which the venerable gentleman replied: "You may be assured, young man, that the Lord's judgments are just,

and that he condemns only in righteousness; and if this man had not been a sinner, his final sentence had not been such as you have heard and seen. That he was a great sinner, is certain: but that he was greater than others, I will not affirm; as there is but too much reason to believe, that there are thousands in the world as wicked as he, who, if boundless mercy prevent not, will meet with the same condemnation with him.

"This man, whose fate you so much deplore, was named Contumacio; a person ever addicted to rebellion: when young, he had the advantage of a religious education, which was no small aggravation of his future sins, as moral instructions were thereby early impressed on his mind. From hence he was constrained, however reluctant, to have some sense of what is in itself either morally good or morally evil; and was often subjected to the sting of an uneasy conscience, especially after any gross outbreaking in sin: those pangs of mind extorted from him many promises and strong resolutions of amendment, and oftentimes drove him on his knees in the closet, as well as to an attendance on public worship frequently on the sabbath-day.

"You will not think it strange, I suppose, if I tell you, that by this attendance on the word preached, together with his converse with religious people, he attained a good degree of speculative knowledge, both of the law and Gospel. This made him look on himself as a converted person, notwithstanding he possessed not one desire after the heart-cleansing power of religion; but amidst all his pretensions, allowed himself in secret sin, and pretty often his sins were obvious enoguh to beholders. As his religion was far from uniform, at some seasons neglecting the word preached, he associated himself with those whom he called good companions, and enjoyed the pleasures which flow from drinking and gaming; and so long as conscience was mild, he laughed at the weakness and narrow-spiritedness of those who could not relish the pleasure which he enjoyed in his indulged liberties.

"Thus it was with poor Contumacio, for the most part, when health and prosperity stretched their easy wings over his dwelling; for he seldom dealt in religion but in cases of adversity, which, though not often, he was sometimes visited with, as you shall hear.

"It was the Lord's pleasure to visit him on a certain time with a violent fit of sickness, attended with many symptoms of imminent danger, insomuch that he thought himself on the very brink of eternity. The dreadful apprehensions of approaching Death, impressed his mind with much sorrow for sin, and gave birth to some hopes, especially with the less intelligent of the godly, that the work might be real and saving, and that his affliction might prove a sanctified means of his conversion. But, alas! my friend, all their hopes were blasted ere they well began to blossom; for as his disease abated of its violence, his convictions abated proportionably, till quite recovered from his bodily complaint, and then he was likewise relieved from the fever in his conscience.

"There is an old saying, 'Afflictions never fail to make a man either better or worse,' exactly verified in this unhappy person; for he increased daily in wickedness to that degree, that he laughed at everything sacred; for one warning after another being disregarded, it pleased the Lord at last to leave him to work iniquity with greediness. Thus it was that perverse Contumacio was hurried forward by his carnal acquaintance, and his own vicious inclinations, from one sin to another, till he hath brought himself to what you have now beheld."

This awful account of the unhappy Contumacio greatly affected me; and as I was deeply musing on what I had heard and seen, my venerable guide thus addressed me: "Come, now let us take a view of the friends of the deceased." And now my attention was wholly engrossed with what passed amongst them, the most of whom were bathed in tears.

"God rest his soul!" says one, "he was as good natured a man as ever lived."—"Ay, that he was," says a second; "and as good a husband as any in the world, and minded that which was good too—though to be sure, poor man, he was not without his failings; but the best have their failings as well as he." "Very true," says a third; "God help us, we are frail creatures! Poor man! it is well for him that he has got safe out of this troublesome world: it is better for them that are dead, than for us that are alive: to be sure, he is the happiest of us all!" Thus they reasoned, and occasionally threw in consultations in regard to the order of the funeral.

I turned to my guide with amazement on my countenance, and stared him full in the face; on which he stopped me short, before I had time to speak, and thus it was that he addressed me:

"These people have no notion at all of sin being punished after death; but whatever course of life a person has led whilst here on earth, they take his admission into heaven, when he dies, as certain. Hell might never have been made as a place of punishment, for any notion which they have of it. If you, or any other person, were to tell these people, that their departed friend had already taken up his abode in those dismal, unfathomable depths, where the worm of conscience dieth not, and where the fire of unspeakable torment cannot be quenched, they would look on you as an uncharitable and a hard-hearted wretch, unfit for the society of mankind. After you have heard and seen, you will, no doubt, think it strange, that the minister who shall perform the funeral rites, should commit the body of this man under the name and character of brother, to the dust, in a sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection with the just, notwithstanding he is for ever separated from them; and yet I can tell you, that such are the ecclesiastical establishments of some nations, that was not the minister thus to bury him, it might cost him no less than degradation from his sacred office."*

"But, my benevolent friend, may it please you to inform me, whether any reason may be assigned, why this man,

* I have often thought it a very great hardship upon conscientious ministers of the church of England, that by the office for burying of the dead, they are tied to use the very same form over the greatest of saints and the vilest of sinners, which must be a heavy burden to an honest, intelligent mind. The form is admirably adapted to the burial of a saint; but in the highest degree preposterously false and absurd, when used in the interment of a wicked man, who dies impenitent and in his sins.

"Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of his great mercy to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed."—This is true of the departed saint; but with what propriety can it be said of a wicked man, that he is a brother to the faithful? Is the death of such a man in mercy, in great mercy? Hath God, indeed, taken the soul of the wicked sinner to himself, instead of denouncing upon him the sentence exhibited in the word: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire?" &c. Is this a taking of the soul to himself in great mercy, as expressed in the ritual?

"We therefore commit his body to the ground—in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

How can this hope of resurrection to eternal life, be sure and certain, seeing the wicked shall certainly be raised to everlasting punishment, and shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God? It would be well, if some expedient was found for easing the minds of the conscientious part of the clergy, either by accommodating the rites to the death of a sinner as well as that of a saint, or leaving the minister at liberty to use or not use this form, as his discretion might dictate, from his knowledge of the party deceased.

although wicked, should be so troubled at his death; for I have somewhere read, that the wicked have no bands in their death, and are not troubled as other men?" To which he replied, "Yes, young man, you have so read, if you have read your Bible; but you must know, that poor Contumacio was thoroughly awakened to a sense of his wrath, on account of his sins, and they appeared to him worse than so many dreary ghosts or hideous spectres, which made him, as you saw, so terribly alarmed when the invincible skeleton approached, and presented the point of his envenomed shaft. A world, ten thousand worlds, would he have given, could he for them have been told how to evade the fatal thrust. But the stroke, not to be evaded, he was obliged to sustain; but, oh! may you never know such a latter end!

"His great disorder of mind was partly owing to his being possessed of a larger degree of moral knowledge than some of his neighbours; so that very many of his sins were committed against the light of his own conscience, which made them the more dreadful unto him. But the chief reason is, God doth sometimes alarm the conscience of a departing sinner, that he may manifest his judgments for the convincing of some, and leaving of others without excuse.

"If you please, I would have you observe yonder woman, who sits pensive at the other end of the room; perhaps her conversion is one end which the Lord proposed by his judgments manifested in this unhappy man; and let me tell you, Novitio, I am of opinion, that she will never forget this awful providence whilst she herself is continued in being. Believe me, Jehovah's ways are in the deep waters, and by far more intricate than the paths of the whirlwind. The great, the sovereign Householder hath an indisputable right, if he sees meet, to burn his wooden vessels, that with their ashes he may brighten his vessels of gold and silver. Now you have seen this man and his end, come along with me, and another scene shall be unfolded."

PART III.

I THOUGHT in my dream, that according to his directions, I followed my guide through divers turnings in this stately mansion, till we arrived at an apartment, where was an old

gentleman, laid on a couch, dictating to an attorney, who sat by him, writing his last will and testament. He signed, sealed, and delivered the deed; and then with the greatest vivacity proceeded to relate the various virtues of his life, seemingly extremely pleased with the recapitulation.

He willed his children to follow his example: and, the better to encourage them to such an imitation, he told them, that it was but a small sum of money, which he and their mother possessed at their first entrance on the marriage-state; and how, by their diligence and frugality, they had saved so and so, mentioning the legacies which he had bequeathed in his will; adding, that if they were diligent and frugal, they might also proportionably increase that which, he blessed God, he had procured for them. He added farther: "My dear children, I am very ill, and doubt I cannot recover: the doctor gives me but little hope: but it is what we must all come to; and you are witnesses of my conduct, ever since you were capable of discerning betwixt right and wrong. I have been just in all my dealings; never imposed on any man; and now, God help me, I am dying, none that ever I dealt with can say to me, Thou didst me wrong; or thou hast cheated me in this or that. This gives me great satisfaction in my present case. I thank God, I can now say, that I never swore an oath in my days, but have often been angry with that wicked practice in others. I never was drunk, but always detested that beastly and wasteful sin; nor, as I remember, did I ever tell a lie: but have always minded my duty to God, attended at church and sacrament duly; and if ever I sinned at any time, I was careful to pray for mercy, was sorry for it, and confessed to God, who is merciful, and will, I hope, pardon the frailties to which we are all subject. If at any time I sinned, it was not with a wicked design, for, I thank God, I have always had a good heart, and meant well in what I did; and it were a great sin to disbelieve in the mercy of God. I hope, that seeing I have always believed in Christ, been diligent in providing for my family, have carefully husbanded what I got by business, and have been mindful of my duty to God, I have little reason to fear but it will be well with me; and now, as in all probability I cannot recover, I have settled every thing, I hope to your satisfaction as well as to my own, and

can die in peace."——Thus it was that he instructed his children in his latest hours! and some of them confirmed all that he said, by applauding the truth of every sentence. However, I thought all along, that I discerned a secret joy amongst the young people: notwithstanding, for decency's sake, they assumed several of the symptoms of grief; and was confirmed in my opinion, by overhearing the eldest son, when the father said, "In all probability, I cannot recover," to whisper secretly to himself, "I hope you cannot;" and when the old man said he had settled every thing to his children's satisfaction, the son whispered again, "Ay, if you would make quick work of dying!" I then thought how foolish it is in those parents who snatch at every opportunity of amassing wealth for their children, seeing that thereby they are so far from gaining their love and esteem, that they become impatient for their death, in order to be possessed of their substance.

In the mean while, the visitants of the old gentleman comforted him against the fears of death, by putting him often in mind of his life so well spent; "which will," said they, "no doubt make you a happy man, as soon as you are delivered from this afflicted body."

Notwithstanding I was greatly surprised at the ingratitude of young Phylargyrus, in wishing the death of his father, I could not help being well pleased with the disposition of the old gentleman's affairs; and turning to my guide, with satisfaction visible in my countenance, I said—

"Ah, sir! what a happiness is it to be rich in good works! O, with what pleasure may this man die, when he looks back, and takes a view of a life spent to such great advantage! How vast is the difference betwixt this and the other man's estate! Contumachio went distracted to hell; but Avaro will, doubtless, go joyfully to heaven the next moment after his dissolution."

To which my guide replied, "I see, Novitio, you are too prone to judge according to outward appearance; not considering that appearance and reality are, very often, two different things: but wait with patience only a little while, and you shall see an end of Avaro, with all his happiness, which you so much admire."

By this time, I thought that old Avaro declined apace,

and ever-watchful Death, who attended on his bed, imposed a fatal weight on his labouring heart; a dark mist beclouded his heavy eyes, and a cold dew rested clammy on his forehead, so that every pulse was expected to beat a finis; but as there yet remained a few sands in the mortal end of his glass, he recovered a little, and, after some time, he said,—"I thought I should have spoken no more, but I have yet time to bid you farewell; farewell, my dear children! I must pay this debt of nature; but my peace is made with God, and I die comfortable!" This said, his head declined, his eyes became fixed, and all the symptoms of immediate death were upon him.

It was now that my venerable guide bid me to mind well who were in the chamber with us; on which, lending a close attention, I beheld several ghastly furies, in all the deformities of reprobation, silently lurking round the bed of the sick man; but none of them offered to come near to disturb his peace. The good Veratio, my benevolent guide, perceiving that the discovery had struck me with horror, willed me not to be afraid; "for," said he, "they will all be very quiet till the old man's departure, and even then they will discover themselves to none but him."

You will easily believe, that I now began to change my opinion of Avaro, having seen who were his silent attendants. The moment of separation come, the beguiled soul took a kind farewell of the body, and came forth from the interior regions, smiling with hopes of the divine reward; and as soon as she ascended to the lifeless lips, she looked around to espy her tutelar angel; but dreadful was her astonishment when she perceived that there was no guardian near, to bear her thence in safety, but a train of relentless furies, waiting to carry her to their dark abode! With infinite terror she turned about, and strove to regain her former possession; but now, alas! the gates of mortality were shut, and the body refused to admit its former tenant. The sly seducers, as so many merciless tigers, leaped upon, and seized her in the midst of her horror and distraction. O, what heart can conceive, what pen can describe, the dreary distraction of the dismayed spectre, when she found herself shackled by those cruel tormentors! A faint description thereof, would make the stoutest heart to tremble, and the ruddiest countenance to gather blackness. The sly

seducers, who attended him incognito during life, remained quiet as possible till the deceived ghost was safely dislodged, and then they assumed the devil in all his infernal forms and tyranny; seized, fettered, and bore her away, notwithstanding she resisted their fury with inexpressible struggles. O, my soul, how dreadful must the disappointment of that man be at death, who in his lifetime feeds upon the transient hope of a hypocrite, and builds his expectance of future happiness on a sandy foundation! Instead of being caressed in the bosom of everlasting love, he is enfolded in the arms of eternal despair! instead of partaking of the ineffable joys of the righteous at death, he is precipitately plunged into the gulf of never-ending anguish!

It was now I began to understand the meaning of such sayings as these: "The hope of the hypocrite shall perish: they look for peace; but, behold evil cometh," &c.

Astonished at the event, I turned hastily to my guide, and asked him how it came to pass, that a man of so many good works, should at last become a prey to devouring flames. "Sir," said I, "how is it? Can it possibly be consistent with the goodness and equity of God?" To which the worthy gentleman meekly replied:

"I tell you, Novitio, that you must not, from what you have seen, infer that the ways of the Lord are unequal, and that he disposeth of his creatures unjustly. For all the good works of which Avaro boasted so much, and depended upon for his acceptance with God, were good only in show: they proceeded not from a principle of living faith; and you are informed by the word of divine truth, that whatever is not of faith, is sin. Nor had the blind Avaro the least regard to the glory of God in all or any of them; but they were performed with a view to answer selfish ends: therefore, when they came to be examined by the eye of impartial justice, they were all accounted abominable deeds; for no act is acceptable to God, unless it springs from a living faith in Christ, and a principle of love to God. He had, indeed, some slight acquaintance with the external forms of religion, but was wholly a stranger to its heart-cleansing and world-overcoming power; but however clean he had made the outside of the cup and platter, being inwardly full of ungodliness and error, he was un-

meet for, and, consequently, could not possess a dwelling in the holy of holies. Avaro, whilst alive, was one of those deceived people who esteem gain to be godliness: his whole life was spent to the end of getting; and being successful therein, he valued himself far above others, fondly alleging, that all his increase was owing to his own industry: and if at any time, he thought of Divine Providence, he imagined that his worldly prosperity was an evidence of his enjoying the favour of the Almighty. As to his religion, he seldom omitted going to church twice on the Lord's-day; and, since he was old, and unfit for business, once almost every day, by which he thought he merited greatly at the hand of God; and was the more confirmed in his opinion, inasmuch as some of his neighbours did not attend on public worship once in a month.

"When at any time he gave a small part of his substance, to feed the hungry or clothe the naked, it was generally to wipe away the score of sin from his conscience, or to prevent his being thought a covetous person; for this was a scandal which he could not endure, but looked upon his carefulness as an excellent virtue. Yea, so ignorant was he of the pure and spiritual law of God, that he expected to be rewarded for gathering together fortunes for his children. Some legacies he hath, indeed, left in his will for charitable uses; for he was one of those griping misers who have no heart to do a generous action whilst their substance may be called their own, and who, to make an atonement for having withheld more than is meet, bequeath sums of money for the use of public edifices at their death. Strange infatuation! to think the defrauding of the legal heir can be acceptable to the infinitely holy God; or in any wise stamp a reputation upon the character of a man. Whilst Avaro lived there was none in the neighbourhood more successful than him; but however he succeeded in his former enterprises, he is woefully disappointed in death; for now the die is cast, his loss is irrecoverable, and his afflictions are beyond a remedy! Believe me, young man," continued Veratio, "all disappointments, losses, and crosses, which can possibly happen in life, are infinitely rather to be chosen, than that disappointment which the successful Pharisee meets with at death."

I was exceedingly shocked at the fearful deception of

this worldling,—rich in life, but poor in death! and, in my confusion of mind, I breathed forth some such desire as this: "Lord, deliver me from the subtle, insinuating love of the world, and stupid ignorance of thy holy ways!" My guide interrupting, said a suitable prayer; for the love of money is the root of all evil, springing from, and ever attended with, ignorance of the holy God; ingenuous and wise was that heart that could suggest a prayer, as "Lord, give me neither poverty nor riches," &c. "Which of your acquaintance, Novitio, think you, can heartily express such a prayer?"

Avaro, being stretched out a lifeless, clayey corpse, Veratio led me away to a third mansion in this stately fabric, where another distressing scene was unfolded.—The unhappy Securus, a young man of about twenty-one years of age, was the possessor here; but his term, alas! appeared to be near an end, being almost spent in a consumption: yet, unhappy youth, he could not bear to be told that he was a dying man. His relations and friends did what they could to prevent him having any thoughts of Death, and a future state, by basely and sinfully flattering him with hopes of recovery, notwithstanding they evidently saw that without a miracle being wrought, his death was inevitable.

One told him, that she knew a certain person, who had been as bad, if not worse, than Securus was then; but was now happily recovered, and was as well as ever. Another advised to send for Mr. Medicus, a distant physician, who, she said, had performed wonders in curing consumptions. A third persuaded him that he looked better than formerly, and was likely to recover: but not one of them was faithful enough to put him in mind of approaching Death and a never-ending eternity, which he was just ready to launch into, lest they should disturb the tranquillity of his mind.

Grieved in soul to hear them flatter the blinded wretch with hopes of life, when they saw that his death was to be expected every moment; I was about to have spoken, but my guide prevented me, by saying, that his friends would look on me as bad as a murderer, if I should disturb his conscience by asking him any pertinent questions relating to a future state. "Is this a display of parental affection and brotherly friendship?" said I. "Miserable relations! Unprofitable and pernicious friends, whose very friendship

is the most barbarous cruelty! Is it not enough that he hath lived a life of unintermitted rebellion against God, but you must study to get him out of the world, insensible of it? Wretched ministers of false comfort, are ye all! O, my God, let me ever be preserved from the fatal influence of soothing flattery!" This said, my guide addressed me in the following manner: "This is young Securus, a thoughtless youth, accustomed to put the evil day afar from him, minding only the present time; for if it happened, as sometimes it did, that the thoughts of Death encroached on his mind, he lulled his conscience to quietness, by promising to repent of his sins, and amend his ways hereafter, when he was old, and had enjoyed the pleasures of life; little thinking that he was to be cut off in the very bloom of youth. Securus was one of those who pretend to be zealously affected for the church, but never come near its assemblies; and even now, in his latest hours, he has not the least thought of Death and eternity; but is angry with his physician, because he will prescribe no more medicines for him. Still he hopes to prolong his life, nowithstanding his lungs are so far spent, that he can hardly utter one half of a contracted sentence. In all appearance, he will never think of Death and judgment, heaven and hell, joy and pain, till the flaming torments, playing around him, rouse his sleeping soul. Then, if not before, he will begin to think of eternity. At last he will be convinced, that the torments of hell are insupportable, and of never-ending duration, though he disregarded every threatening thereof denounced in the sacred oracles.

"Vain Securus, whilst in health and prosperity, laughed at the timidity of those who had any dread of offending a holy and terrible God: and accounted religion to be nothing else but whining hypocrisy: but, ere long, he will feel, to his sorrow, that the wrath of a sin-avenging God is indeed something to be afraid of, and that religion is real, and not chimerical.

"In health, he accounted the lives of the religious to be madness, and their latter end without honour. So he lived; and now his insolence in basely contemning the ways and people of the Lord, hath issued in that stupefaction of mind which, ere long, will terminate in intolerable anguish; then he will be fully convinced, that his sup-

posed fools are the only wise ones on the face of the earth, and that their latter end is more honourable than that of all men besides."

This awful proof of degeneracy touched me so sensibly, that, as I thought, I uttered such a lamentation as this:

"O Sin! monstrous beyond all productions! Thou most abominable of every evil! Thou hast bereaved us of our native knowledge possessed in our creation-state, and diffused darkness through the whole understanding! Thou hast changed our ancient love into present hatred; and all our former holiness gives place to sinful insensibility! Can a man stand at the entrance of the grave, and there concert the schemes of earthly pleasure? Having his feet on the threshold of the gates of perdition, can he yet believe himself in a land of security and rest? Who could ever conceive, without ocular demonstration, that such blindness overspreads the mind of a rational being, as should cause him to look on his body as tenable, even when in the chilling embraces of desolating Death? But so it is, through thy prevalency, thou most loathsome of every nature! By thee destruction overwhelms the human race, thou fertile source of innumerable evils! O let me for ever admire the discriminating grace of the great Three in One, who, by the special influences of the divine Spirit, hath realized sin to me in all its hateful deformities and dreadful consequences; hath made my once-stupified and benumbed conscience feel a gentle touch of his fatherly anger on its account; hath given me a detestation of sin; and hath, according to his own purpose and grace, been pleased to lead me for pardon and acceptance unto that precious blood, enriched with all the fulness of indwelling Godhead! O, my soul, bless thou the Lord for a sense of sin; for though it is painful, it is also salutary. Let them not be accounted for thy companions, who deem a sense of sin to be superfluous in religion."

It was now that I thought my guide Veratio interrupted me, just as the sin-hardened Securus departed this life; and said, "Thoughtless he lived, and thoughtless he died; but now he is thoughtful enough! Believe me, Novitio, he hath already thought more of hell, sin, and rebellion, than ever he did in all his life. Look you, Novitio, to yonder lake of fire and brimstone, where he is already plunged, under-

going the unknown tortures of the second death. And now he hath a never-ending eternity before him to think of what is past, and what is future. Unhappy is he who is thoughtless in life, and unprovided for in death, like the wretched Securus! A pompous funeral is, indeed, designed him; but, alas! what pleasure can lifeless clay or a tormented ghost take in funeral pomp, or the crocodile tears of the mercenary mourner? But let us leave his relics to endure that honour designed to be imposed upon them, and let you and I see what farther discoveries we can make."

O, sir, said I, what dreadful scenes you unfold! Is this, Veratio, the portraiture of unmasked death? Do all my fellow-creatures die thus miserable? And is there no such thing as a comfortable Death to be seen? O, sir, my very flesh shudders at these awful discoveries.

My guide replied, "Know, young man, that sorrow is antecedent to joy, grief before consolation, darkness before light, and humility before honour. Shrink not back, when the cup of bitterness kisseth your lips seeing it is preparative to the cup of salvation. But if Novitio trembles to see such horrible appearances of Death, only think what they must feel, who endure them! However compassionate your timorous disposition, I shall shew you but one instance more of the death of the ungodly; after which, I shall endeavour to recompense your pain by more pleasant discoveries. I mean, I shall discover unto you some of the godly, with their latter end. In the meanwhile, let us attend the disconsolate Letitia, in her departing agonies."

This said, he led me away to a magnificent apartment, decorated with all the productions of art. In this apartment, brilliant as it was, we saw a lady whom all the riches of the East could not make happy: she lay on a bed of down, surrounded with hangings of damask, it is true, but found no more rest than if she had lain on a flinty rock: she was under the power of an inveterate malady, and had been so for several years; but greatly added thereunto by murmuring at, and repining under, the afflictive dispensation. She seemed to me to be about thirty-five years of age, and had been possessed of a goodly measure of external beauty, before it was blasted by this inveterate evil; so that whilst a maiden, she was what we commonly call a genteel lady: and whatever qualifications Teresa could boast of, were all to be found in the youthful Letitia. In her affliction,

which was indeed grievous, being a cancer in the breast, she greatly envied the happiness of her visitors, purely because they enjoyed health, the loss of which she inconsolably lamented; and instead of receiving the visits of her friends with that grateful civility which might have been expected from a person of her rank and education, reduced to such distressing circumstances, she was used to give it them in some such terms as these:

"It is well for you: you can go abroad at your pleasure, and visit your friends, and with them partake of the sweetness of life. You may make much of it now, for you have all the genteel amusements to yourselves. As for me, I know not what evil I have committed more than others, that I should be imprisoned in this solitary place, to endure such racking pains as I do. I hear of many who have lived far more liberal than ever I did, who still continue to enjoy all the pleasures which either town or country can afford; but I must lie here on this irksome bed, and nobody knows when I shall be able to go abroad, so much as to take an airing, or to see one friend or another. I employ the best physician in the country; but how it is, I know not, he can cure others, but all his prescriptions seem to be lost upon me." It was thus she entertained her friends, and thus she rendered herself disagreeable to all that came near her.

A godly minister in the neighbourhood was used occasionally to visit her, though his company was never very desirable, his conversation being by far too serious for a lady of her disposition of mind. Her elevated station, and the known precariousness of her temper, long deterred him from dealing so faithfully with her as he desired: but at last he greatly offended her, by telling her that she ought to consider herself as a dying woman, who must soon give an account of all her actions to a just and impartial God, whose sentence cannot possibly be evaded. He faithfully told her, that she must be regenerated by the Spirit of God, and sprinkled with the blood of Christ, before she had any reason to expect that her death would be comfortable. He told her, that unless she was renewed by the Holy Ghost, no regard would be paid at the great tribunal to her elevated station in life: for only those in every nation who fear God, and work righteousness, shall be saved; for the Lord God, said he, is no respecter of persons.

By this seasonable advice and salutary instruction, the good Philanthropos incurred her ladyship's displeasure so

far, that she could never after gratefully receive a visit from him, but was always sullen and out of temper in his company.

The venerable Veratio turned himself to me, and thus he said: "Letitia was a fine gentlewoman, a descendant of a right honourable and illustrious family, genteel and handsome in the graces of her person, and by her birth entitled to an ample fortune. Her noble parents, with all imaginable tenderness, from her earliest days, indulged her to the last degree: they never cared to cross her inclinations, nor to restrain her humour, however extravagant; by which means she became imperious and haughty, a perfect humourist in her temper. From her youth upward, she was inured to all the vanities of the town; the park, the playhouse, and the opera, were as familiar to her as her bedchamber; and well she knew how to act her part in every polite entertainment. Her beauty, rank, and fortune, brought a noble earl lawfully to her bed about the age of twenty-one. Being commenced wife, she abated nothing of the pleasures to which she had devoted herself, but added very considerably thereunto, by receiving and returning many useless and unprofitable visits, until the fatal time on which she was seized by this malignant evil, which is indeed the forerunner of her death; and then she was out of temper with every body who came near her. Husband, children, and servants, all shared in her anger. Letitia's beauty was esteemed more than Eastern pearls: she vainly imagined that the diamond lost its brilliance, when her eye deigned to glance upon it; the damask rose its loveliness, when compared to her more lovely cheek; and the coral she supposed to yield all its perfection, and own itself undone, when her mellifluous and pleasant lips were unmasked; but poignant pain, and frequent sickness greatly impairing her adored beauty, surprisingly added to her affliction. So long as her strength would admit, she was wont to try her features in the looking-glass oftener than once a day; but how the faithful mirror was charged with falsehood, and bore the weight of her indignation, is not worth your while to hear, or mine to relate."

"O, sir," said I, "methinks that on all our looking-glasses, this motto, 'Memento Mori,' ought to be written, and a Death's head fixed on the top of every frame; for

even beauties, who delight to gaze upon looking-glasses, meet with no reprieve from Death.

"That son of Melpomene, who so judiciously hath drawn the portraiture of *the Grave*, represents beauty as not one whit more grateful to the worms than deformity, and as certainly their feast. If you please, sir, I shall recite the passage to you, as it is not very long:

> 'Beauty! thou pretty plaything! dear deceit!
> That steals so softly o'er the stripling's heart,
> And gives it a new pulse unknown before!
> The grave discredits thee: thy charms expung'd,
> Thy roses faded, and thy lilies soil'd,
> What hast thou more to boast of? Will thy lovers
> Flock round thee now to gaze and do thee homage?
> Methinks I see thee with thy head low laid,
> Whilst, surfeited upon thy damask cheek,
> The high-fed worm in lazy volumes roll'd,
> Riots unscar'd. For this was all thy caution!
> For this thy painful labours at the glass,
> T' improve these charms, and keep them in repair,
> For which the spoiler thanks thee not! Foul feeder!
> Coarse fare and carrion please thee full as well,
> And leave as keen a relish on the sense.'—BLAIR.

"According to the doctrine of this solemn bard, sir, every time that the beautiful lady tries her graces in the glass, she should reflect how the worms will one day burrow in her cheeks, and her eyes become the nauseous habitation of loathsome insects; that she shall then be on a level with the meanest beggar who ranges the streets of the metropolis, and yield no higher relish, though fed with turtle, to worms, than the miscreant who keeps life in his body by mouldy bread, and the garbage of the kitchen, scarcely procured by lowly cringes, and the most fervent entreaties."

"Ay," said Veratio, "Mr. Blair may sing in that solemn strain till he break the strings of his lyre, before the beaux and belles of our day are likely to mind what he says; for to this day it hath been at the peril of any servant or attendant whatsoever, to tell Letitia that her looks are altered; nor hath her physician and surgeon ever dared to tell her that her disease is incurable. Full of pain indeed is the unhappy lady; but she languishes out her time in murmuring and repining at the sad dispensation, and envying the happiness of others."

My guide finishing here, I thought in my dream, that her physician entered the chamber, and feeling the lady's pulse, she asked him if he thought there were any hopes of

her recovery. The doctor replied, "I am afraid, madam, there is not." Then she fell into a fit of visible discontent, and sinfully uttered many things against the ways of the Almighty; and continued to the last charging him with inequality.

The time of her departure being come, I saw terrible sights: her life being spent in gaiety and madness, her latter end was without honour: for no sooner was the unhappy soul drove forth from the once delicate body, now the vanquished prey of relentless Death, than she was seized by the cruel messengers of destruction, and forcibly dragged to appear at the equitable bar of a pride-resisting God; from whence, as a just reward of her unholy life, she was sent, bound hand and foot, to be "cast into utter darkness, where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched:" there she wept, she wailed, and gnashed her teeth. There she found many of her former companions: but, alas! their wonted mirth was departed, and horrid despair sat lowering on every countenance; whilst the convulsive bowels of ever-dismal hell rolled her impetuous billows upon them, and every single sense drank in the unutterable torment.

The miserable end of Letitia thus surveyed, I cried out, "O God! who hath hardened himself against thee, and hath prospered! If a self-adoring Pharaoh say, 'Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?' thou hast a Red Sea, in which he and his hosts shall be drowned. If a haughty Nebuchadnezzar say in his heart, 'This is great Babylon, which I have built for the house of my kingdom, and for the glory of my majesty,' the heart of a beast shall be given to him, and he shall eat grass like the oxen in the field. And if a God-forgetting lady should spend her life in the pursuit of transitory pleasures, the sequel shall prove that she has been dead to God, while she lived to herself."

Then turning to my guide, I said, "I perceive, sir, that Death is no respecter of persons, knoweth no distinctions, can neither be bribed nor moved by entreaty, much less can be resisted by power." "No, no," replied Veratio, "Death cannot be entreated, is an utter enemy to mercy, and a perfect stranger to distinctions: the majestic prince, and the rustic peasant; the noble earl, and his servile groom; the amiable lady, and the scorched cook-maid, are equally the same to

his indiscriminating shaft: all distinctions vanish in the grave, that common receptacle of rich and poor, noble and ignoble, beauteous and unseemly, old and young, the lordly prelate and famished curate,—all ranks and degrees of men meet here on a common level: in this respect, one end happeneth unto all men. People of distinction too often desire no other heaven besides the vain and fantastic pleasures of life; little considering, that, ere long, they must bid adieu to sublunary enjoyments; and the most high God hath fixed it as an invariable maxim, that the desire after, must precede the enjoyment of heaven: hence, no desires after the future enjoyment of God being possessed in this life, it is not rationally to be expected, that they can enter into the celestial felicity at their death.

"These earthly gods," continued Veratio, "are much dissatisfied, if they receive not a great degree of homage from their inferiors in life; but, believe me, nothing is more common than for them at death to stand trembling under the force of self-conviction, before the judgment-seat of the King of kings, who hath declared himself to be no respecter of persons."

"Then," said I, "woe is me for my fellow-creatures! into what destruction has sin involved them! How few, alas! are they who know the things which make for their eternal peace, before they be for ever hid from their eyes! Unhappy, most emphatically unhappy indeed are they, whose only heaven consists of glittering dust, and whose bliss is composed of the empty honours and wretched pleasures of this seducing and bewitching world. Let honours in the highest degree be imposed upon me, and let me enjoy all that men call happiness; what will it profit, if my soul must be banished, for ever banished, from the amiable presence of my God? Can these, Veratio, ever be deemed an ample compensation for the loss of God, in his divine excellencies and glorious subsistencies? A lean, an empty heaven, indeed, it must be, where this is wanting. O my soul, let thy delights for ever be attracted by the refined, the sublime pleasures of our holy religion! and thou, my heart, look down with indifference upon all those fineries which worldlings so much admire!"

PART IV.

Having thus spoken, I thought my guide, the good Veratio, led me from this to another apartment in the opposite side of this stately building; and as we entered the apartment, I heard a person, with a mournful tone of voice, thus express himself: "Few and evil have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage; a few days, and full of sorrow." "What is the meaning of this?" said I; "this is a strange kind of saying." To which he replied, "You will understand this better hereafter." When we entered the chamber, I saw a grave man, of advanced years, who seemed to be in great distress both of body and mind; and thus he addressed some of his friends, who, it seems, had been endeavouring to comfort and strengthen him in the prospect of dissolution:

"O my friends, you little know what a sinner I have been! let sinners of highest rank be thought of, and I assure you I am worse than all; yea, I am the very chief of sinners; the vilest and most unworthy creature in the world. Oh! how justly doth the Lord afflict me now! he leaves me not comfortless in my last trials, without dreadful provocations; such provocations as make my very heart bleed to think of them: justly, alas! am I left to the scourge of an evil conscience, and made an instance of the terrible displeasure of an offended God! O what innumerable mercies I have enjoyed at his hand! but such hath been the depravity of my nature, the sinfulness and rebellion of my life, that I have grossly abused and trampled them all under my feet: and what can I now expect, but to be for ever banished from the presence of him whose goodness I have so grossly abused, and against whom I have most ungratefully sinned? I tremble to think of enduring his displeasure; but, if I must endure it, I know it is my desert, and in my condemnation I will confess him righteous; for I, only I, have destroyed myself."

Here he was stopped by excess of grief, which vented itself in a flood of tears; and one of his friends who sat by him, thus replied: "My dear friend, I am exceedingly surprised to hear you lay such heavy accusations against yourself. You charge yourself with the worst and basest of crimes; whereas all we, your friends and acquaintance,

who have been witnesses of your conduct, are fully convinced, that ever since you made a profession of religion, your whole conversation hath been unblamable, and becoming true godliness."

To which the sick man replied: "O my friend! it is that —it is that which grieves me now! Oh! how it pains me to think, that people, who could only see my outside appearance, took me to be somewhat; when, alas! my own heart all along told me that I was nothing. Even now, the discovery of the pride and hypocrisy of my heart, is a burden intolerable. I would fain have been sincere, it is true, and I often thought that I strove for it: but, O wretched and miserable creature that I am! I never could attain it. Sometimes, formerly, I flattered myself that I was one of the Lord's people; but now the disguise is taken off, and I am convinced that I have been, and still am, an enemy to all real righteousness, an utter stranger to the heart-purifying religion of the holy Jesus.

"Oh! it grieves me to think how I have imposed upon the church of Christ, where I have only been an intruder, a vile tare growing up among the Lord's wheat, a filthy goat amongst the innocent sheep of the Redeemer! but now it is my greatest fear, that I shall be for ever separated from both him and them."

Here he was again stopped by the anguish of his spirit, and, after a few minutes, another friend of his, in a spirited manner, replied: "My dear brother, this is only a temptation of the enemy; and such, I trust, ere long you will find it to be. It hath pleased the Lord to withdraw from you for a moment, and, for holy ends, to leave you to the buffetings of Satan; but, believe me, believe God himself, he will return with mercy and salvation, and with everlasting loving-kindness he will gather you. What though your sins are great, the merit of the Redeemer's sacrifice is infinitely greater; what though the cry of them reach even to the heavens, his precious atonement surmounts them all; yea, although they are of a scarlet or crimsom stain, the blood of Jesus, the Son of God, shall wash you, and make you white as wool, or the whiter snow. Satan is indeed permitted, as the accuser of the brethren, to load your conscience with heavy accusations; but yet a very little while, and the base accuser shall be cast down; Satan shall be trampled for ever under your victorious feet.

"Let my friend consider the many great and precious promises which are made to the 'poor in spirit, the weary and heavy-laden, the captive, the broken-hearted sinner, the hungering and thirsting soul, the mourner for sin,' &c. These are the names and characters of the Redeemer's people, and all these meet together in my brother; which is to us, though not to yourself, an evident token of your adoption by grace into the elect family. Had he not loved you, he would never have put his own seal upon you; had he not chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, you could never thus have groaned under the depravity of your nature; and having loved you, it is with an everlasting love, a love which never can alter, but is sure to endure to the end. How can my brother sink, whilst the arm of everlasting love is underneath him? Or perish, whilst the eternal God is his refuge? O, my friend! think of the above characters of the redeemed, and try if you find not some of them belonging to yourself."

He ceased here; and the sick man, with a trembling voice, replied: "I thank you, my dear sir, in the most grateful manner, for your tender care for my welfare; but alas! I can see nothing in me that looks in the least like to the character of the Redeemer's people. I see no promise in the Bible that belongs to me; for a word of promise would be a comforting stay to my sinful soul, now in my last distress. It is true, that many times in my life, the trouble of my mind hath been alleviated by such considerations as you propose; but now I am a dying man, ready to land upon a dark eternity, and cannot draw rational conclusions from such considerations. O, eternity! eternity! nothing can make me look into eternity with pleasure, or render Death in any wise comfortable, but a sensible manifestation of my interest in the death and resurrection of Christ, the Spirit himself bearing witness with my own spirit, that I belong to, and am born of God. The pain of dying is nothing, when compared with the pangs of soul I feel in looking forward to a dreadful futurity. I may now say, in the language of the Psalmist, 'Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of his water-spouts; all his waves and billows are gone over me; I sink in deep waters, wherein there is no standing.' I know, my friends, you would have me trust in God, and apply the promises to myself; and gladly

I would, but I find that I can as soon remove mountains, and cast them into the sea, as trust and believe in God with a faith of appropriation. He hideth himself from me, and how shall I discern him? O that I knew where I might find him! I would come with Job, even to his seat, and spread my complaint before him; but, alas! he covereth himself with darkness, and will not admit of my approaches. I press forward, but cannot find him; I look back to past experience, but can see no track of his Spirit's work; I turn me to the right hand and left, but can perceive nothing at all of him. On the contrary, I am environed with devils, and my own sins, which are more dreadful to me than all the infernal tribes; these only do separate betwixt me and the God of salvation."

I thought that here the poor man's words were a third time interrupted with the agitation of his grief, and he shed abundance of tears: his friends prayed with and for him; fervent and much distressed they seemed to be in prayer; every one imitating the conduct of the wrestling patriarch, when at Peniel. They likewise reasoned with him concerning the immutability of divine love, the infinite value of the blood of Christ, the certainty of the promises of the covenant, the wise ends which God might have in withdrawing from him in his calamity, the assurance which the Scriptures give us of the Holy Spirit finishing his work in the souls of his people, and the confirmed malice of the implacable tempter. They likewise expressed their hope that the Lord would yet appear for him in a way of consolation, before he would take him down into the dark valley of the shadow of death; but, if it should be otherwise, they were assured of his landing safe on the shore of felicity: but all their endeavours seemed to be fruitless, for he still persisted in his belief that the righteous God had, in strict justice, cast him off, as unworthy of a place among his chosen ones.

I now turned to my guide with disdain on my countenance, and thus addressed him: "Ah, sir, what a wretched deceiver this man must have been in his lifetime, that he is thus given up to the scourge of an evil conscience at his death! O! it is a fearful thing thus to play the hypocrite with God!"

To which my guide, with some warmth, replied: "I told

you before, Novitio, that you must not always judge of a man's estate according to his outward appearance. This man, whom you so rashly censure as a deceitful hypocrite, is the good Humilius. So far from being what you apprehend, that he is one of the precious sons of Zion, a faithful disciple of the Redeemer, and a special favourite of Jehovah, whose ways are in the deepest waters, and whose judgments are unsearchable. Few have equalled this venerable saint for fervour of spirit and sanctity of life, and few have drank so deep of the heavenly Spirit of the immaculate Jesus, notwithstanding he is thus tried like silver in the furnace. Whilst health and vigour attended Humilius, he was blessed with a greater than ordinary discovery of his own sinfulness, both in the root and in the fruit; and he was one of the very few who daily grieve under a sense of the pollutions of their depraved hearts, and consequently under a sense of the defilement and imperfections of their best services. This discovery greatly tended to lessen his comfort and joy; so that he seldom had those elevations of spirit with which some are favoured: but, at the same time, it had a happy tendency to make him extremely careful of all his proceedings. His conscience was affected with the slightest touch of sin, and smote him even for an unsanctified thought. He retained such a sense of sin, that he was always low and mean in his own esteem; saying, with some ancient worthies, 'So foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee: I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men; and have not the understanding of a man.' Contrary to the practice of many professors, he accounted himself the unworthiest of all, utterly unworthy of a place in the church of Jesus. On the other hand, his fellow-christians looked on him as a man of exemplary piety, holy, and unrebukable in his conversation in the church, and in the world; patient in tribulation, fervent and constant in prayer, desiring not his own, but the glory of God; not his own, so much as the good of the Redeemer's people."

This unexpected account of Humilius greatly amazed me, and made me more solicitous to know what might be the event.

Therefore I addressed my guide in the following manner:

"Venerable sir, I readily acknowledge my error, and humbly beg your pardon for my foolish censure; and I pray you would signify your forgiveness by informing me, whether it is possible for such, as you have described Humilius, to be cast off by the Almighty, and at last to perish." To which I thought Veratio replied: "No, Novitio, it cannot possibly be, that such a one can perish, for there are none but the regenerated who can answer the description which I have given of the good Humilius; and any one may know, that none are regenerated but those who are the objects of God's special love; that all those he loves with an everlasting love, he loves to the end: therefore, however dark he may be in regard to union with, and interest in, the Lord Jesus Christ, and through him in the love of God, it is not possible that he can perish. These are dark paths, Novitio, through which Humilius is led; nevertheless, they are sure paths, and lead directly to the kingdom of light: and, let me tell you, he is led even now by the Fountain of Light himself, notwithstanding he seems to be blind to any sense of his Leader's presence. His patience under his affliction, his resignation to the divine will with respect to bodily pain, his abhorrence of evil on account of sin, and his justifying the ways of God, together with his earnest desire of forgiveness and acceptance, are so many evidences of his interest in the love of God, though at present he can see none of them."

"Sir," said I, "permit me to ask you another question, for I am born to be troublesome. Can there be any reasons assigned, why the Lord should suffer some of his dearest saints to fall into such desertion and distress in their latest hours?"

"Yes, Novitio," said he, "some reasons may be assigned, why it should sometimes be so; but want of love in God to their persons, want of tenderness in the Redeemer, can never be justly thought to be the reasons for it; but God hath holy ends to answer by every part of his procedure, and no doubt, by this dispensation also. I suppose that one end which he may propose by the troubles of good Humilius, may be to stir up his professing people to double their diligence in the use of all appointed means, thereby to make their calling and election sure to themselves; that,

when they arrive at their latest hours, they may be exempted from those spiritual conflicts with which they see others exercised."

"Ah! but, sir," said I, "how is it that the Lord maketh choice of those who are most eminent in holiness, to endure those afflictions which are designed for the edification and improvement of their surviving brethren?"

Voratio replied, "There is no necessity, that I know of, Novitio, for you to ask a reason for the proceedings of the Almighty; nevertheless, the difficulty here vanisheth, when it is considered, that for the Most High to choose for such purposes, persons whose conduct hath been less guarded, would not answer the end designed. We naturally expect that professors who are unguarded in their conduct, and remiss in the known duties of religion, will find hard work of it on a death-bed, which will be no less troublesome to them, than if they lay upon pointed flints; so that, although the party himself, may be at last saved, it is through fiery temptations and grievous afflictions; but when Christian people behold a person of the most circumspect and conscientious conversation, springing from principles of the most eminent piety, mourning after an absent God, and lamenting his sins, which all the world besides himself are strangers to, it naturally tends to stir up each to self-examination, and to consider his own ways. The learned Fleming relates a story of a northern worthy who had been, in divers cases, favoured with an extraordinary discovery of the mind and will of God, who, when he came to a death-bed, called his friends to him, and thus addressed them: 'O my friends! I find it a great matter to be a real Christian, and unrebukable before God; I declare to you, that such hath been my support for the space of ten years past, that God hath not been out of my thoughts as long at once, as one might go to the cross and come again (which might be done in ten minutes,) unless I have been asleep, or about business; and, after all, I assure you, that I am even now at the very brink of despair.'

"Another end which God may have in view, perhaps, may be to remove the carnal confidence which his own people are too prone to have, in the grace which they have already received. In some frames, instead of studying to be strong in the grace that is in Christ, they are strong in

that which is implanted in themselves; vainly imagining, that they can overcome the severest trial in the strength thereof. With an ancient professor, when he stood on a place slippery enough, they say, 'My mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved:' not considering, that the Christian's conquest depends not on the grace which he hath already received, but on fresh supplies communicated in the time of need, from Him in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell. All fulness dwelling in Jesus, naturally supposes that there is nothing but emptiness in the creature, and that therefore the sublime exercise of Christian faith consists in a constant reliance upon God in Christ, for mercy to pardon every sin, and for grace to help in every time of necessity.

"Now when Christian people behold the greatest of saints labouring in the dark, under the severest buffetings and sharpest conflicts of soul, it naturally tends to make them suspect their supposed strength, and to exercise themselves in an habitual reliance upon God. And seeing their need of fresh supplies of grace, how naturally are they led, by such dispensations, to the inexhaustible Fountain of all fulness, for strength proportioned to their days of difficulty and trial; and especially for large supplies in their death-bed trials, because very often they are found to be the greatest; and well it is that the Lord is pleased by any means to teach his people to live upon himself.

"But come, Novitio, and I will discover to you the immediate cause of the sorrow of good Humilius."

This said, the venerable Veratio anointed my eyes with his precious eye-salve, and in an instant I discerned a deformed fiend, crouching close by the side of Humilius, and whispering him in the ear; and at every sigh which the good man made, through the pressure of his grief, the malicious fury smiled a most ghastly grin. But giving a close attention to this evidence-darkener, I perceived a chain harder than adamant, round his middle, the end of which was secure in the hand of a majestic person, who shone brighter by far than the sun in his strength: by which I saw, that although it may please the Almighty sometimes to permit Satan to disturb the minds of his choson ones, he never suffers him to destroy them; and that he can go no farther than permitted by the divine Redeemer.

"Learn from hence, Novitio," said Veratio to me, "that the same enemy who allures to sin, whilst in health and prosperity, will, if permitted, tempt to despair in a state of sickness and adversity. And be you, yea, let every Christian be thankful, that Satan is ever kept under a suitable restraint by the power of Almighty God, otherwise feeble mortals must of necessity sink under his great superiority."

Here my guide ceased; and, as I thought, the good Humilius, for the last time, opened his mouth, and said; "Ever since I knew any thing of religion, flying to Christ has been my last resource. I am now dreadfully oppressed with the weight of my sins, but whither shall I fly for help, but to the mercy of that God against whom I have sinned! He only hath the words of eternal life. There is none in the heavens above, none upon the earth beneath, that can help me but him: as it has been in my lifetime, so it is now: this is my last resource: I die, if I trust not in him; I can but die, if I trust in him: therefore I will prostrate my soul at the foot of his throne, and there will I sue for mercy. If I perish, I perish! and if I should, as I deserve, be spurned from his presence, it shall be relying on his own blood and righteousness, for there is salvation in none other."

Having uttered these words with the dying rattle in his throat, his speech failed, to the great grief of his godly acquaintance; some of whom said, "Alas! lest this should be a mean of turning the lame out of the way." One thing I beheld, pleased me mightily; which was this: the moment that good Humilius ceased to speak, the majestic person of whom I spoke, who shone so gloriously, gave the chain, wherewithal the fury was bound, a severe twitch, and obliged him to leave the good man to his rest; which so enraged the squalid infernal, that he growled most horribly, and in anguish gnawed the adamantine chain; then disappeared, and I saw him no more.

In the meanwhile, my benevolent guide, by some supernatural means, opened my ears that I could hear, and in some measure understand the language of spirits; which I no sooner perceived, than with all diligence I attended to what now passed with the good Humilius; in whose concerns I found myself by this time deeply interested. As I listened, I heard the Almighty, who but a little before

seemed to stand upon Mount Sinai, surrounded with clouds of darkness and horrible tempest, now speak from Mount Zion, in a still small voice, and said to the speechless man: "I have loved thee with an everlasting and immutable love; therefore I have drawn thee by dark paths to myself; yea, I have caused thee to pass under the rod, and have brought thee into the bond of the covenant. The way which I led thee, thou knowest not; but I have made crooked places straight before thee, and rough places smooth: thy warfare is now accomplished, and I have bruised Satan for ever under my feet."

The dying man no sooner felt the blessed effects of the well-known voice of God, than in an ecstasy of joy, he mentally replied, "MyLord and my God! Now, Death, do thy worst! Come as soon as thou wilt, thou awful skeleton, for now thou art welcome! Now my Lord is returned with loving-kindness, I can with pleasure enter thy cold embrace, and repose my flesh in thy gloomy mansions. Hasten thy pace, thou tardy executioner: cut short thy work, thou friendly enemy! I long to enjoy the beatific vision of him who loved me to the death, and washed me in his blood, enriched with all the fulness of indwelling divinity."

I saw in my dream, that guardian angels descended from heaven in blazing squadrons, to attend the dismission of this sanctified soul, and to guard her passage to the celestial world. As the good Humilius ceased to breathe, the attending angels clapped their wings for joy, that one of the chosen race had passed through the glory-birth,—that one more of the elect charge was safely gathered home; with holy fervour they saluted the glorious spirit, and bid her welcome into the undisturbed rest of their splendid society. She thankfully received their pure caresses, and, struck with wonder and astonishment at unspeakable grace, she instantly mixed her melodious voice with those warbling choristers, her companions, who sung the most delightful song, to which every ear attended. I thought I could discern the glorious notes of sweet deliverance from the lips of the newly-departed soul, in a key more exalted than the rest. O with what pleasure did I listen to the solemn song of one who so very lately was languishing in deep distress!

"O, Veratio!" cried I, "what blinded creatures are we

mortals! The glories of heaven blaze all around us, and yet we perceive not in the least their illustrious splendour."

Having sung the noble anthem to distinguishing love and unspeakable grace, they stretched their brilliant pinions, and swift as thought shot through the vault of heaven, towards the regions of eternal felicity. As soon as they arrived in the empyrean plain, I beheld innumerable companies of the celestial hosts, in their long, their glorious, and refulgent garments, with crowns of gold upon their heads, and triumphant palms in their hands, come in bright procession to the golden gates of the New Jerusalem, to congratulate the soul on her safe arrival in the glory-world, and in triumph to conduct her up to the throne of God. As they passed along through the streets of Paradise, which were all paved with diamonds and topazes, the departed Humilius was often saluted by his former companions in warfare, who greatly rejoiced that his course of pilgrimage was finished, and the time of his coronation arrived. In their bright procession from the golden gates of the holy city up to the jasper throne, shouts of loud joy, and peals of rapturous triumph burst from each tongue, and made all the celestial arches ring in concert with their elevated voices.

I thought I saw the blessed, the ever-adorable Jesus descend, from the midst of the throne, and meeting Humilius, embraced him with tender affection: he also called upon the excellent Theophilus (under whose ministry Humilius, it seems, had been savingly converted), and let him know, that now another diamond must be added to his crown, as another of the children whom God had given to his faithful ministry, was happily arrived. Then he took Humilius by the hand, led him up to the all-glorious throne, and to him who sat in the most majestic state thereon, he said: "Most holy Father! behold this darling object of thy love and choice, this subject of redemption is safely arrived in thy more immediate and most joyous presence; being fully prepared for it by the divine influence of the Holy Ghost. Let him now possess the mansion which hath so long been prepared for him, and enjoy the rest unto which he was predestinated."

Then he who sat on the throne, thus bespoke the soul: "Come, my beloved one, receive the joys which I have prepared for thee, and the glory unto which I have ap-

pointed thee; for I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and by my special care of thee, I have drawn thee to my glory."

Then the records of eternity were all laid open before him; and now being blessed with the beatific vision, he could read every line therein, which related to his own state, either in time or in eternity. And oh, how great was the wonder of the soul! how inflamed was her gratitude, when she found every circumstance attending her pilgrimage, was unalterably fixed in the decrees of God, which are so dark and difficult unto us in the church below! With holy amazement she beheld that the whole chain of providential events flowed from, and centered in, the love of God to her in the person of Christ. Silent no longer could she sit: but her wonder broke forth in rapturous songs of ceaseless praises, in concert with all the redeemed hosts, who, now, in the fervour of unutterable love, struck the golden harp, and sung responsive to the trembling wires.

Having followed Humilius thus far, Veratio spoke to me, and lo! the vision was withdrawn; but left some impressions on my mind, which, I trust, will never be erased. Being at last capable of a little reflection, after my astonishment was abated, I could not help thinking of the infinite difference between those who die in the Lord, and those who die in their sins;—the latter being precipitately plunged into the fearful abyss of dark and ever-burning hell, where the worm dieth not; whereas the former are immediately transported, on angelic wings, from a land of sin and many sorrows, into the more immediate presence and ineffable light of the ever blessed Three, to partake of all the joys of the undivided One. Then I said, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them."

PART V.

As I was ruminating on these things, I thought that my guide called me away, saying, "We may yet see Death attended with very different circumstances;" and, although I thought myself by the last scene fully repaid for all the terror I had undergone at the beginning of my acquaintance

with Veratio, I was inspired with the most eager desire to have farther discoveries of sanctified Death. I followed him with the greatest eagerness out of his chamber, wherein I had viewed such an agreeable scene, into another apartment adjacent to it, and there he shewed me a happy disciple, who, with great composure of mind was laid on a sick bed, under the pressure of heavy affliction. Calm and serene in the midst of tempestuous trouble; in the midst of trying sorrow, his patience stood unmoved, even as the stately oak lifts up its lofty head, despiting the western tempest; or as the stable rock, amidst the furious surges, endures the wrathful discharge, without the least emotion. Rent with racking pain, and oppressed with deathly sickness, he patiently, though with a trembling voice, said, "Good is the Lord's will concerning me! the cup that my heavenly Father hath mingled for me, shall I not patiently drink it?" I thought in my dream, that he was thus addressed by one of his friends: "Sir, I would have you repose yourself a little, for your afflictions are very heavy; and, notwithstanding your spirit is submissive, your flesh must needs be weak." To which he replied. "My afflictions are all known to the Lord; yea, it is my God who hath fixed the degree of them; and seeing the Almighty is pleased to do it, I dare not, I cannot complain, for I am well assured, that he can do nothing wrong. Were it not right, he could not do it, omnipotent as he is. My afflictions, indeed, make this clay tabernacle to totter; but are lighter than nothing, when put in the balance with my sins. I well know they might be infinitely greater, and yet my God be a just God. But mercy and tender compassion guide his hand, even when he smites, and his bowels yearn, when he mingles a bitter cup for any of his people. I am fully persuaded, that he will lay no more upon me himself, nor suffer others to lay any more upon me, than he will support me under; for the Lord is very pitiful and full of mercy, even to me, though I deserve nothing at his hand, but to be left to lie down in sorrow: I am, therefore, altogether easy about the measure of my afflictions."

It was here he stopped; and one of his friends rejoined: "My dear sir, how great is the blessing to be thus filled with comfort in the time of your sickness!" To which the

sick man replied: "Indeed, my friend, my comforts are far from being so high as you imagine: on the contrary, I assure you, that sensible enjoyment runs very low with me at present. But this is the ground of all my confidence—'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;' he is the rock of my soul; and however my comforts flow, I account them not my Christ. Since it pleased the Lord to visit me with this affliction, which I think is drawing near to a period, I have had many struggles with my own unbelieving heart, and many conflicts with Satan, in regard to my interest in the love of Jesus. But, glory to the Almighty name, the enemy seems to be withdrawn, my anchor is within the vail, and my hope is fixed in Immanuel. I myself am a poor helpless worm, and my faith is very tottering; but the rock of my salvation, the object of my faith, can never be shaken. With him there is no variableness, nor so much as the least shadow of a change; I may, therefore, boldly trust in him, and calmly wait the issue of his providence.

"After all," continued he, "I must confess, that I have often been indulged with sensible manifestations of divine love, when, to my own apprehension, I stood less in need of them than at present. But, O, let me not attempt to correct the proceedings of unerring wisdom! The Lord's ways are the best, and I desire to submit to them: he hath graciously promised that he will never leave nor forsake me, and I account him faithful who has promised. I bless him for his word. This is the hold into which I flee for shelter, in the dark and stormy day. I would not, for all the world, be without an interest in the above precious promise, for I live not now by sense, but by faith, and this affliction hath found a good deal of work for the little faith I possess. Believe me, my friends, I have often been obliged, in times of darkness and difficulty, to live upon the word of grace; and it has, upon the whole, been spirit and life to my soul. I never knew the promise to fail; but the word on which he hath caused me to hope, hath always been confirmed. I have ever found the Almighty to be as good as his word, ever better than my fears suggested, and infinitely more gracious than my deserts."

The sick man being spent with so much speaking, I thought that he was obliged to be silent for a small space,

to recover himself. But such was his zeal for the welfare of his friends, that as soon as possible he spoke to them as follows:

"My dear brethren, in all appearance, I am now near, very near, my last hour! and I tell you, and beg that you will regard it as the words of a dying man, that the cross of Christ is of excellent use in mortifying us to creature-objects. Cross dispensations of Providence, bodily afflictions, and the temptations of Satan, are such excellent corrosives, that by the direction and influence of God the Spirit, they prove the destruction of sin in our members. For my own part, I declare to you all, that I have learned more of God by afflictions, than by all the sermons that I have ever heard preached."

It was now that Veratio whispered thus to me: "I well believe, Novitio, what this good man says of his afflictions; for as the fervent fire is to the golden ore, and water to the sullied linen, so are afflictions in the hand of the Spirit of God, to those who are exercised with them. Parricide is lawful in no case else but this: here it is a righteous thing that afflictions, which are the legitimate offspring of sin, should at first curb the power, and at last destroy the being of their accursed parent. And for our comfort, let us know that afflictions themselves cannot survive the sin which they instrumentally destroy."

In the meanwhile, the dying man continued and said, "My dear friends, despise not the chastening of the Lord; resist not affliction with a foolish pagan bravery; neither murmur, repine, nor faint, when you are rebuked by him; for he chastiseth not in anger, neither does he rebuke in hot displeasure. If you are the objects of divine love, you must expect the application of the rod; for 'whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.' If you are the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus, you must expect in this life to bear the cross, for it is always antecedent to the crown. Without afflictions, you do not, you cannot bear the image of the heavenly Jesus, for he was afflicted; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. They greatly mistake, who hope for Christ here, without afflictions along with him. Our passover is never to be eaten in this world, without bitter herbs; there-

fore, that religion which is unconnected with the cross, is not the religion of Christ, but of the world. Be you assured, my friends, that the way in which no cross is found, must needs be the broad and downward way; for the cross of Christ is the right, the only pathway to the kingdom: and those who despise and reject the cross, will find themselves, at death, deprived of the crown." Here he stopped again, his strength being exhausted; and his silent friends stood with a mournful pleasure around his bed.

After some time, one of them made so free as to ask him, "whether he would choose to live or die, on supposition that the Almighty would grant his desire?" To which, being a little refreshed, he replied: "Indeed, my friend, I cannot tell you; for so far as I know my own heart, which hath all along been a misery to me, I neither desire life nor death: for me to live is Christ, and for me to die is eternal gain. I know that the Almighty hath numbered my days, and my months are with him; he hath fixed the limits both of my time and of my habitation, so that I cannot pass over them: yea, he hath by an immutable decree, appointed the very moment and means of my dissolution. Why, then, should I anxiously think, or care any thing at all about the matter? His purposes are for ever the same, and the thoughts of his heart unto all generations. His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. If I am appointed to death, as I think I am, I trust he will glorify himself in my death; and if it should be that I am appointed unto life, he hath wisdom and power sufficient to glorify himself even by my living. I yield myself wholly to his disposal; for the Judge of all the earth can never do wrong; living and dying, may God be glorified in me!"

Here he ceased; and his friend, with visible sympathy, rejoined: "Happy, my dear brother, it is for you, to be thus indulged with strength from on high, in the time of your great distress. But tell me, my friend, if your strength will permit, do tell me if you have no desire to live and see your wife and children comfortably provided for? Methinks it is a desirable thing, to see our children educated in a religious manner, and settled agreeably in the world. These things often lie with a distressing

weight upon my mind, and are ties which strongly bind me down to earth, and from which I sincerely desire to be delivered."

The sick man replied: "My dear friend, I must confess to you, that next to the welfare of the Redeemer's church, my wife and children are dear to me;* and if any thing could now prevail with me to desire a longer sojournment in this valley of sorrows, it would be the welfare of my dear children, and dearer wife, for they have always been dear to me, ever since I enjoyed them. Consulting their welfare, had formerly been attended with great anxiety; but now I see, that in my over-carefulness, I was far from being submissive to the sovereign pleasure of an all-disposing God; and, as far as lay within my power, was for wresting the dispensations of Providence out of his unerring hand. Had I done what I could to promote their welfare, and left the issue to the Almighty, I had done well; but, alas! I could not be easy, unless I evidently saw the issue answer my desire. But, blessed for ever be that God who turneth our hearts as he does the rivers of water, at present all anxiety appears to be gone, and my wife and children are no burden at all to my mind: for I know that the God whom I serve, will convert the stones of the wall into bread, before he will suffer the seed of the righteous to famish.†

"Settling my children in the world, appeared a very desirable thing, before I came to a death-bed; but now I am taught that their settling in the world does not, in the least, depend on my being present with them; for the determination of Jehovah hath long since divinely gone forth by a firm and an unalterable decree, in which all their cir-

* These words of Stabilius: "Next to the welfare of the Redeemer's church, my wife and children are dear to me," are very remarkable, and ought to be regarded. That he loved his wife and children, is evident from what he says both in this place and elsewhere; but however fervent his affection for them might be, it gave place to the love he bore to the Redeemer's church. This evidences the true spirit of Christianity in him, and serves as much to fix his character, as the exalted exercise of his faith; being expressive of the very spirit of the text, Matt. x. 37. "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." If this is to be regarded as a rule, it will fix a lasting stigma upon those professors who are so full of care for themselves and families, that they have neither leisure nor inclination to care for the church of God. These are like withered limbs in the common body; they neither impart nor receive nourishment; neither are their death-beds likely to be honoured, as that of the good Stabilius.

† An illustrious instance of divine regard to the seed of the righteous, and care for the widow and fatherless, we have in the provision made for the numerous family of a worthy minister, the Rev. Mr. Burford, lately deceased.

cumstances, great and minute, are infallibly settled, by the unerring wisdom of Him who worketh all things after no other council but that of his own will. The life of the sparrow, and the dinner of the raven, are provided for in his grand decree; yea, the very hairs of our body are numbered, coloured, and disposed by unerring wisdom; much more are the bounds of our habitation and the extent of our possessions, the result of divine appointment. If the Lord is pleased to make my children poor (as it is his prerogative to make poor), how shall my presence with them be able to make them rich? or if his sovereign bounty shall be pleased to exalt and make them rich, what circumstances so pernicious, as to prevent the execution of his design? Holy and reverend is his name; he disposeth of all creatures and things, as his wisdom doth direct. By his determination kings reign, and princes decree justice. Races and battles are under his direction; yea, the very turning up of the lot is determined by Jehovah; much more the station and circumstances of his people, and their children. Why then should I desire to interfere in the manner of settling them, to the disquieting of my own mind; for God both can and will bring his purposes to pass, without any instrumentality, if he is pleased to take me to himself! Their education in religious principles, hath been by far the most tender point with me, well knowing the influence which a godly education, often has upon the conduct of youth: but this also I am enabled to leave with the Lord. Not from any indifferency about them, so as to be careless about their welfare in time or eternity; but I have ever been so sensible of my deficiency, in regard to paternal duty, that I often fear my children have been more injured by my imperfections, than profited by my precepts and instructions. Besides, I am fully persuaded, that God will be at no loss for an instrument, when he is about to teach them the knowledge of himself.

"Be assured, my friends, that children are not brought one hour sooner to the knowledge of God, on account of their parents' lives being preserved; but many have, by their parents' death, been brought into circumstances by which the Lord hath been pleased to lead them into the knowledge of themselves, and the secret of his own immutable love to their persons. Therefore I commit my ten-

der offspring to the protection and grace of him who has deigned to become the father of the fatherless, and who hath said to men in my condition, 'Leave your fatherless and your widows to me.' I trust his word; and believe that of all guardians he is the most disinterested. My dear Honora, my beloved spouse, always hath been dear to me, ever since it pleased the Lord, by his holy ordinance, to make us one; but although she is so dear to me, as that we seemed to possess but one soul, I can with pleasure leave her a few days behind me in this world, notwithstanding it is, and she finds it to be, a world of sin and sorrow. I know that she is an elect vessel, a daughter of faithful Abraham, and an heiress according to the promise; and as such, she is under Divine protection, and cannot miscarry. Fear not, my dear Honora, fear not the safety of your passage through life. I know that this world is a land of snares, and a hell of pain and sorrow, when compared with the haven of pure felicity to which we are bound. It is, and, my dear, you know it to be, a land inhabited with implacable enemies to the heaven-born pilgrims who are passing through it; but let not this discourage my Honora, for 'He who saved your soul from Death, will also preserve your feet from falling. He who loved you with an everlasting love, will bear you through all difficulties and dangers, and make you more than conqueror.' It is your God, my love—your Husband and Friend, who reigns supreme over all creation, who holds the reins of government in his own Almighty hand, and thereby curbeth the enemies of his people at pleasure, so that the most potent of them all cannot lift up his heel against a child of God, without his divine permission. He never grants a permission to any of them, without a proper limitation: Hitherto thou mayest come, is the permission; but thou shalt go no farther, is the restraint; even as Satan obtained leave to destroy every thing which belonged to pious Job, but was prohibited touching his life. Thus it is, that the feeblest of the Redeemer's flock dwell secure from real danger, beneath the covert o divine protection.

"My dear Honora, our great God is a husband to the widow; he is a wise director, a rich provider, a powerful protector, and as such he is yours; yours in the strongest

obligations; yours in time and to all eternity. The confidence I have in these things, makes me willingly resign the wife of my bosom, and my tender offspring, to the will of that beneficent Being, who hath a sovereign right to dispose of me and mine, as he shall see most for his own glory.

"My dear friends and fellow-travellers, beware of immoderate care; for you may greatly injure, but never can you thereby profit your children at all. Think not that their settlement in the world, depends either less or more upon you; for when you have cared your last for them, the Sovereign Ruler will dispose of them just as he sees meet, without so much as once consulting you in the matter. Ah, my brethren! when you lie, as I do now, upon a death-bed, you will see, that all immoderate carefulness springeth immediately from ignorance of, and enmity against the ways of a holy God. Alas! how many Christian people are wofully perplexed with fruitless care all the days of their lives, and are thereby prevented of that usefulness which they might otherwise be of to the church of Christ! Believe me, the best thing you can do for your children, is solemnly and seriously to dedicate them unto God, leaving them and all their concerns at his disposal. If you do this in good earnest, by an habitual act both you and they will reap the advantage of it; yours will be the peace, and theirs will be the profit. Remember what young Samuel got by his early dedication."

He ceased here, his strength being exhausted; and after some time, one of his friends thus addressed him: "Dear sir, I cannot persuade myself, but a mind thus stayed on the Lord, must be filled with the most joyous transport."

To which the good man replied: "My mind is composed, and calmly fixed on the unalterable word of an ever-faithful God; my peace is settled, though my joys are far from being elevated. It is not on inward frames and feelings that my hope is stayed, but on the promises of the everlasting covenant, which are in Christ, yea, and amen to every believer. Inward feelings are, indeed, extremely pleasant, but I have not dared for many years to trust them; for at best I have found them fleeting and transitory: now enjoyed—dead anon! now like the full-blown rose my comforts have flourished—immediately stripped of all their

beauty, like the winter vine! Whilst I lived upon my frames, I was all upon extremes; either ravished on the mount of enjoyment, or gone down to do business in the deep waters. One hour I said, 'My mountain stands sure, I shall never be moved;' perhaps in less than another I supposed myself, like Peter, sinking into the bosom of a fatal billow. No solidity could I ever find in the frames and dispositions of my own heart; but I never found the promise to fleet, nor the Lord to depart from the word he hath spoken. In all my trials, his immutable word hath been my stay; and on it alone will I lean, when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. And thus in quietly resting on his word, he will finish the salvation of my soul.

"Indeed, if the Lord should be pleased to indulge me now with the sensible comforts of his felt love, shed abroad in my heart by his Holy Spirit, it would make this lonesome valley, into which I am entering, by far more delightful, and my passage through it abundantly less thorny. But if, in his wisdom, he should see meet to withhold from me such a desirable measure of sensible manifestation, I bless him for his unalterable word, and I bless him for strength to rely upon it.

My dear brethren, beware of making to yourself a christ of the dying comforts with which your holy redeemer is pleased occasionally to indulge you. Remember, that if his tender concern for your peace and pleasure, induce him to privelege you with the sheddings abroad of his love in your heart, the same tenderness of you will induce him to withdraw his comforts, when he sees himself supplanted, and you live upon those comforts rather than upon his person, grace, and righteousness. Remember always, that salvation, and the comforts thereof, are two very different things; the fulness of the former being often possessed, where there is but a very small degree of the latter. In my early days of grace, I was generally wont to frame to myself notions of the love of God, according to the glimmering twilight of my own mind, and the good or evil frame I found myself to be in; but through rich grace, and amazing mercy, I have been taught rather to judge thereof by the written word of God, by which I have been piloted through seas of difficulty, when darker sensations have lost sight of shore. And

I trust the Holy Ghost will guide me by the said written word, till in his good time he is pleased to land me on the glory-shore, and bring me into the more immediate presence of the great Three in One."

This said, he remained silent for a considerable time, and the venerable Veratio turned himself to me, and thus accosted me: "Now, Novitio, you behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. This is the good Stabilius, a Christian of the right kind; one who may be called a father in Israel: he can well distinguish between husk and kernel, shadow and substance, truth and error; a faithful one in the household of God. His holy soul can feed upon nothing but what is spiritual and divine; such bread, and such only, as descended from God out of heaven, is pleasant to his taste. In his lifetime, which hath been an uninterrupted succession of crowding sorrows, the good Stabilius could live as well, and as satisfactorily, upon a word of promise, as some others could do upon five hundred a year. Thus in his lifetime he was so happy as to live by faith in the promises, and now he is dying, he is still the same. The word of the Lord is his comfort and stay. But although his unbelief appears now to be banished from him, I can tell you it was not always so; for the time was, when under dark dispensations of Providence, he complained with Jacob, that all those things were making against him, though now he is better informed. Yea, whatever infidelity we can find in Job, David, Asaph, one part or other of the life of good Stabilius hath furnished him with a sad remembrance of theirs; though, upon the whole, his faith has prevailed gloriously; and I imagine he will never more feel an impulse from unbelief.

"Now, Novitio, I have a mind to unfold an amazing scene to you; such a scene as you have never before surveyed." Then he touched my eyes with an eye-salve of divine preparation; and instantly I saw what was extremely amazing. I saw a numerous troop of restless infernals beleaguering the bed of the sick man, which was well defended by a brilliant minister of heaven, divinely superb in his immaterial array. Clothed with impenetrable armour, the martial guardian waved a flaming sword, with which he kept all the furies of the pit at a proper distance; so that

although the most implacable hatred and rage glowed in every breast, they were not able to come near, to disturb the mind of Stabilius. Sometimes they tipped their tongues with falsehood, and accused him of the most abominable crimes to the guardian, who with holy contempt disregarded all their clamours. Repulsed in this, they turn their accusings into the most fervent entreaties to the angel, that he would scabbard his sword for a season, and allow them the pleasure of distracting the dying man. But the benevolent protector, firm as a rock, remained inflexible to their entreaties, and deaf to their accusations, resolving, in obedience to the will of his God, to defend his charge to the last extremity. Being thus repulsed, even hell itself became hotter within them, and irritated with fierce revenge, they rushed in fearful numbers against the heavenly sentinel. Thick as atoms in the sun beams, their hissing arrows were shot against him and his beloved charge; but, skilled in martial encounters, he received their charge, and quenched their fiery darts with his shield, with which he also covered Stabilius. With his brandished falchion, which emitted streams of fire as he waved it, he made the infernal tribe to give back; but filled with indignation, and fired with revenge, they instantly rallied their broken force, and returned resolvedly to the charge: and I had the pleasure of observing, that as often as they rallied, the heavenly Chieftain put them to the flight. Being indulged with a view of the angelic war, I thought of an ancient saying, "The angel of the Lord encamps round about those that fear him;"* and, turning to my guide, I said, "O, sir, it was well said of that Hebrew prince, who spent his youth in rural employments, 'Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.' Ah, sir! they are well kept whom the Lord doth keep, and the man is blessed whom he thus preserveth." To which Veratio

* "The angel of the Lord encamps round about those that fear him." There is a surprising beauty in these words of the Psalmist, as expressive of the highest safety which the most timorous heart can wish for. He encamps with a view to continue in this situation.—It "is around them," rather than beside them. Beside them, would have argued great safety; but encamping "around," implies infinitely more, because every passage is guarded, and no way left for the enemy to give the attack with advantage. Encamps around when dangers are most rife, and humanity is most inactive and off its guard.—"Around those that fear him;" rather thus expressed, in condescension to our unbelieving weakness, the believer being sometimes conscious that he fears God, when he dares not conclude that he loves him.—That no room may be left for unbelief to found its arguments upon, the potency of the illustrious protector is pointed out in his character, as the "angel of the Lord."

replied, "Now, Novitio, you have had a sight of faithful Abdiel, so justly celebrated by the famous Milton, for his constant and firm adherance to Immanuel, even when left alone in the camp of the rebellious seraphim. There it was,

> That among the faithless, faithful only he;
> Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
> Unshaken, unseduc'd, unterrify'd,
> His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
> Nor number nor example with him wrought
> To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
> Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd
> Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
> Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught;
> And with retorted scorn his back he turn'd
> On those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doom'd.

"Thus, Novitio, this faithful guardian nobly retreated from the tents of rebellion, and ere long returned, commissioned with the rest of the celestial hosts, to fight with the perfidious miscreants, in the quarrel of the Most High; and there he discovered at once his zeal for his God, and the prowess of his own martial arm; for when,

> ——————— Before the cloudy van,
> On the rough edge of battle ere it join'd,
> Satan with vast and haughty strides advanc'd
> Came tow'ring, arm'd in adamant and gold:
> Abdiel that sight endur'd not, where he stood
> Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds.
> ——————— But from his armed peers
> Forth stepping opposite, half way he met
> His daring foe, at this prevention more
> Incens'd, and thus securely him defied.
>
> Proud, art thou met! thy hope was to have reach'd
> The height of thine aspiring unoppos'd,
> The throne of God unguarded, and his side
> Abandon'd at the terror of thy power
> Or potent tongue:
> ——————— But thou seest
> All are not of thy train; there be who faith
> Prefer, and piety to God, though then
> To thee not visible, when I alone
> Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent
> From all: My sect thou seest; now learn too late
> How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.

"It was thus the fervent Abdiel accosted the prince of rebels, when they met between the opposing fronts of the angelic armies, on that awful day on which all the hosts of heaven and hell were drawn forth to battle, on the till then unstained field of ether. And,

> The grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
> Thus answer'd the faithful Abdiel.
> ——————— Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour
> Of my revenge, first sought, for thou return'st
> From flight, seditious angel, to receive
> Thy merited reward, the first essay

Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue
Inspir'd with contradiction durst oppose
A third part of the gods, in synod met,
Their deities to assert.
——————— But well thou com'st
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win
From me some plume, that thy success may show
Destruction to the rest.

At first I thought that liberty and heav'n
To heav'nly souls had been all one; but now
I see that most through sloth had rather serve
Minist'ring spirits, train'd up in feast and song;
Such hast thou arm'd the minstrelsy of heav'n,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compar'd this day shall prove.

To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied:
Apostate still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
Of erring from the path of truth remote;
Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name
Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,
Or nature; God and nature bid the same,
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. ————————
Reign thou in hell, thy kingdom; let me serve
In heaven God ever blest, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd;
Yet chains in hell, not realms expect; meanwhile
From me return'd as erst thou said'st from flight,
This greeting on thy impious crest receive.

So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell
On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield
Such ruin intercept; ten paces huge
He back recoil'd; the tenth on bended knee
His massy spear upstay'd.

"According to the matchless Milton, the faithful Abdiel first asserted the sovereign right of his God, both by word and deed; and thus he hath continued an invincible hero in the cause of his master, a willing and faithful guardian of his militant children, as you have just now seen in the conflict between him and the infernal brotherhood."

"I thought in my dream that I thus replied:—I thank you most heartily, my dear, my venerable Veratio, for this discovery, so strange and surprising in itself; and I thank you most gratefully, dear sir, for this opportunity of seeing the valour of this celebrated angel. But worthy Veratio, whose delight appears to be to instruct the ignorant, I pray you deign to inform me, if it is possible that such a war may be maintained around a Christian, and the party for whom the strife is, remain unacquainted with it?". To which I thought he replied: "You may be at no loss, Novitio, to know that the best of Christians, even fathers in

the Redeemer's family, see and know only in part; therefore there be many things of this kind transacted among the immaterial inhabitants of the spiritual world, without their knowledge. Every Christian may certainly be informed by the volume of revelation in general, that all the angels of God are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who are appointed heirs of salvation; nevertheless, there are many offices of kindness performed by those benevolent spirits, in behalf of the saints, which the most intelligent Christians remain utterly ignorant of, whilst they sojourn in this land of separation and sorrow. As we may see in the case of good Stabilius, he perfectly knows that God is the prime efficient of all his peace and composure of mind; but he doth not know that there is a martial seraph appointed by the sovereign of heaven, as the guardian of his bed, and protector of his dying moments; nor is he in the least apprehensive that there is such a swarm of reprobate spirits so near, and so earnestly seeking the distraction of his mind.

"If the militant members of the chosen church could really see their shining attendants, and understand all the ways of the Lord perfectly, they would enjoy the heavenly glories before the appointed time; but the fulness of joy and the manifest glories of the redeemed are reserved for eternity, therefore not to be expected in time. On this account, many of the Lord's works are done in the dark, and his ways are involved in thick clouds; so that poor purblind mortals cannot discern them before they enjoy the light of eternity. And you yourself, Novitio, may know that the conflicts betwixt our benevolent protectors, the guardian angels, and our enemies of the reprobate race, are not to be seen with bodily eyes, but with the more refined rays of the mind. Bodily eyes discern corporeal objects, but spiritual sight alone can discern spirit."

I thought in my dream, that towards the dissolution of Stabilius, I beheld a squadron of armed seraphs, who were despatched from the armies in the skies to assist Abdiel in the protection of this chosen disciple; who as soon as arrived, and fraternal salutation passed after the angelic manner, told him, that Jehovah, having from the throne of his holiness seen, that great numbers of the enemies had assaulted him and his charge, had sent them to his assistance.

Abdiel thus replied: "Welcome, my spotless brethren! welcome are ye now to me! for I have been vigorously attacked, and still the daring infernals are resolute; but through the strength of my God, I have preserved my charge inviolate. Come, my brethren, let us prepare for immediate action, for the enemies, though frequently repulsed, being now afresh recruited from hell, are rallying their utmost force, and soon will return intrepidly to the charge." This said, I perceived that those ever-armed seraphs each of them drew his flaming sword, fixed his shield, and planted themselves around the bed of good Stabilius, every hero putting himself in a posture of defence, saying with united voice, "It is the good-will of our Lord that his chosen ones should be preserved."—Happy man, said I, who art thus defended! I thought in my dream, that after all this was done, the good Stabilius, as if he had received fresh vigour at the arrival of his celestial visitants, opened his mouth, and most fervently expressed himself in the following manner: "I know that he is God, and that he is my God. He hath guided me from my conception to this my dying day; all his judgments towards me have been mingled with mercy, and holy and reverend is his name; all his mercies have been mixed less or more with judgment. I will, therefore, with the royal Hebrew, sing of mercy and of judgment; unto thee O Lord, will I sing. A chain of well-concerted and blessed providences laid hold of me at my conception, and till now hath led me in such a manner, that all hath been for good; and now, my friends, it is with amazement I see both the ends of the chain unalterably fixed in the eternal throne. It cometh from and centereth in the Father's everlasting love to me in the person of Jesus, unworthy as I am; and O! let God, even God in the person of the Redeemer, be praised, be owned, and glorified with my last, my departing breath. Hear me, my fellow-christians, for I speak now within the immediate views of eternity, and Death even now oppresseth my weary lungs: behold, I go the way of all mankind; but I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and although after my skin worms destroy, as they certainly will, this body of mine, yet in the flesh, even in this flesh, now almost consumed, I shall see God; yea, I shall see him for myself, and not for another;

not at a distance, but near, though my reins be consumed within me. I shall see him on that momentous and much-desired day on which I shall in my whole person be made like unto himself." These words were expressed even in the arms of Death, so that he was quite spent with speaking, and lay in a profound silence for a minute or two; then in a holy triumph, with a countenance that displayed a sense of conquest, he said, "Lord Jesus, come quickly; into thy hands I commend my spirit" These were his last words, and a few minutes after he quietly yielded up the ghost, and slept in Jesus.

In the meanwhile Veratio addressed himself to me as follows:—"This, Novitio, is Christian fortitude, distinct from the ancient pagan bravery of the Romans. If you see a Brutus, or Cassius, or even a Cato himself, outbrave the fears of Death, it is from ignorance of the real nature and state of an hereafter; but it is the clear knowledge of eternity, and of the perfections of God, which fortifies the mind of Stabilius against every painful apprehension, now he is making his exit from the stage of time, and struggling hand to hand with the quencher of the animal flame.

"Mind the tender Honora; mark how she stands with a mournful pleasure by the bed of her dying partner, hers but a very few moments longer. Two things oppress her with sensible concern, and two things inspire her labouring bosom with holy joy. She is most sensible of the awful dispensation which lays her under a multiplicity of cares; and O! her dear, her much-esteemed Stabilius, the pain which he endures in his departing moments, becomes hers by sympathy. As she supports his head, and tenderly wipes the cold sweat from his brow, every sigh of his, every symptom of pain, cuts its way directly through her sympathetic heart: she dreads the parting with him, yet longs for the dissolving moment. Souls thus knit by holy matrimony, and thus made one by sympathy, feel in parting such rending and tearing of the sensitive faculties, as neither tongue nor pen can describe. But in the midst of her sorrow, two things support the amiable Honora, namely, the consideration that these departing agonies put a period to every grief, a final period to every sorrow of her dear, her much-valued husband. And she hopes, upon solid and scriptural grounds she hopes, that in a

little time she herself will be in mercy taken to the celestial world, where she shall again receive with unspeakable joy, the pure and spiritual caresses of her glorified husband, where they shall spend a vast and endless eternity together, in the transporting pleasures of paradise, and mutually join in celebrating the praises of their common God and Saviour. Thus she mourns; and reason says she should: but religion teaches her to mourn as one that is not without hope."

The dissolving moment come, the watchful infernals took wing and fled, leaving the soul for ever to the blessed possession of uninterrupted peace; she ascended triumphant, and rapt in extatic wonder, sat for a season on the clayey lips of her beloved mate, gazing on the splendour of the messengers of heaven, notwithstanding she herself shone more gloriously than all her attendants, who, free from envy, joyfully saluted her with, "Peace be unto thee," and fondly congratulated her on her safe arrival on the confines of eternity.

By this time I thought I saw an innumerable company of seraphic flames, all of them shining in the perfection of glory, who, as the former, came at the will of Immanuel, to congratulate the soul on her passage through the wilder ness of tears, and the gloomy valley of the shadow of Death, and her safe arrival in Immanuel's country; and then gave her their united welcome into their resplendent society. I cannot now, ah! I cannot describe the joys of the glory-born soul, when she first perceived herself invested with the radiance of heaven, and sensibly pressed to the fervent bosom of everlasting love, for her admiration was inexpressible. But my benevolent guide, the good Veratio, now becoming an interpreter, with no small difficulty I gathered up some few of her rapturous expressions, which but for his assistance I could not have done; for she spoke in the celestial tongue, which is a language that I never had learned; and so imperfect is the fragment which I collected, when compared with the original, that I redden with shame, and my heart flutters with fear to expose it to view, lest I should thereby injure the subject, and eclipse the glory which I would gladly (the Lord knows) recommend to human esteem. But encouraged by the confession of incomparable Paul, "Here we see darkly, and but in

part," I will venture to write it, though it is, as it were, with fear and trembling.

No sooner was the happy soul disentangled for mortality, but she was filled with the fulness of the glory of God, and in the highest elevations of transport, cried out with a voice of the most perfect melody, "Is this the resting-place to which we weary pilgrims are brought after a moment's trouble below? Glorious rest! I have often heard, I have often longed for the possession of thee, when tossed with the tempest of life. Happy I! Blessed peace! Uninterrupted joy and permanent peace! Hallelujah! Let all the empyrean hosts, let all the militant church incessantly praise in the highest strain, the eternal and bounteous Provider of this glorious rest, in which all our labour and sorrow shall eternally cease! Is this the heaven I have so often heard preached? This glorious place! O heaven! How often have I heard of thy divine excellencies, when sojourning in the world below! But now I behold thy refulgent glories without an interposing cloud, and lo! the thousandth part of thy beauties was never disclosed. Happy art thine inhabitants, thou imperial city, for the great King is in the midst of thee; his uncreated glories irradiate every corner of thy blissful streets. Blest and unsullied mansions of the disembodied spirits of the just! Happy I, who was predestinated to the possession of this divine inheritance! Is this the Saviour whom I formerly denied? Ever, till the day of unspeakable grace, did I say unto thee, thou adorable Lord, I will not have thee to reign over me. And, O my Lord, I am now at last blest with the immediate vision of thee, thou Sharon rose divine! Thy beauties, Lord, how amiable! O how transcendently great are thine excellent glories! Eternal and all-conquering Saviour, I am now at last ravished with thy superabundant goodness, which on earth I could scarcely with coolness admire, but now I behold thee to be all-excellent and divine! Is this the crown, the end of all my former crosses? Massy treasure! glorious lustre! How striking is the stupendous blaze! In the world below, my eyes were dreadfully obscure; but now I behold all the excellencies of Godhead, all the radiant beams of unclouded divinity, in their fullest resplendency, shining forth in thine immaculate person, thou adorable Jesus. Blessed thou! happy

I! Blessed afflictions, which in thy all-powerful hand, thou eternal Spirit, have fitted me for those unsulliable mansions of uninterrupted felicity.

"Sin and Death, where are ye now? trampled for ever beneath my victorious feet. Adorable Saviour, the conquest is thine! Ye tempting fiends, the promised time is now come that I scorn for ever your envious rage. No more, ye malignant infernals, shall your cruel buffetings be able to shake the tranquillity of this ever-peaceful and glorified mind. Nor shall your spear-like tongues, ye sons of violence and deceit, evermore be able to tarnish my conduct with blame. Ye children of perfidy, ye treacherous persecutors of the gracious church, the gulf is fixed, and here you can never come a second time to perplex me with sorrow; nor shall the tumultuous rage of fiery lusts and impetuous passions, ever more be able to separate betwixt my best beloved and me.

"I am now secure within thine insurmountable walls, O thou blessed Jerusalem! Overwhelmed with the insupportable blaze of delighted divinity, here let me bask for ever, though the bliss is insufferable. Already filled with the fulness of manifested and imparted love, let me drink for ever at the fountain of life. Ever, for ever, my God, will I praise thee; incessantly praise thee, whilst eternity endure. Grace and providence, providence and grace, shall fill up the measure of mine eternally delightful song. This is my employment; this is the task prescribed by the sweet obligations of gratitude!"

Having gathered up this most imperfect fragment of what I heard, I thought that the scene was withdrawn, and the vision departed from me; and I, astonished at what I had heard and seen, turned to my guide, and in transport, said: "No wonder, sir, if Balaam, who saw the visions of the Almighty, desired to die the death of the righteous, and enjoy such a latter end as theirs. No wonder, if Judas the traitor despaired and hanged himself, after having betrayed such a glorious Saviour as this. Ah, Veratio, my good veratio, may I enjoy the divine favour, whatever else I may lack! May I endure all sorrow which both earth and hell can inflict, rather than miss of the glory which shall be revealed! Fall short of heaven! O! I tremble at the thought! Fall short of heaven! If I should, I should be

of all creatures the most emphatically wretched and miserable. To love, to see, and not enjoy, ah, what intolerable anguish would it give! If it depended less or more on works of my performing, I could not avoid falling short: but it is of grace, all of grace, of nothing but grace, and so let grace have the glory for ever secure. Yet, O let me not deceive myself in a matter of such grand importance; but raw and unexperienced as I am, I think I have something of the same hope which the good Stabilius expressed; and O, Veratio, may my latter end be like his!"

PART VI.

HERE my guide addressed me, and said: "Now, Novitio, you have seen something of Death transformed into life, and it is glorious in your esteem; but if you will follow me, we may yet make farther discoveries relating to the departure of the sanctified." By this time my curiosity was stretched to the utmost pitch; therefore I needed but little persuasion to attend to farther discoveries, seeing the departure of Humilius and Stabilius was so very agreeable, at least to myself: therefore I said to my guide, "Lead, Veratio, lead wherever you will, and I will follow you."

"Are you sure of that?" replied Veratio; "perhaps you may be mistaken: a much stronger person than Novitio appears to be, hath deserted me before now; and the strongest have found it difficult enough to adhere to me at certain times." "Pardon me, sir," replied I; "I meant whilst you unfold such agreeable scenes; for, I perceive, sir, their influence is attractive." "Well, Novitio," replied he, "I agree with you in that; for when you are strongly drawn, I do not doubt but you will run apace. However, at present, let us attend to the matter in hand."

Accordingly he led me away from this to another, but mean apartment; and as we entered, he said—"Now, Novitio, prepare yourself for seeing the wondrous works of the Almighty." I admired what miracle I was now to behold; but ere long I beheld a miracle of grace: a poor woman and three small children were the humble inhabitants of this despicable hut. As I learned from my guide, the poor, but tender mother, whose name was Fidelia, had been confined to her bed by a deathly disorder, for the

space of six weeks or upwards; and by this time she seemed almost conquered by the fatal enemy to nature, though she still retained the perfect use of her reason, and still was capable of speaking to her visitants. At the time of our going into her mean apartment, some few of her friendly acquaintance, some of them meanly, others of them better attired, were come to visit her, desirous to perform the best offices of Christian friendship, expecting that her departure from earth was at hand. One of them, who stood by her bedside, spoke to her thus: "My dear friend Fidelia, I see your body is very low, and in all appearance the hour of your departure is approaching near: but if strength will permit, I should be glad to know how it is with you in your soul: for I have sometimes known the soul to be most healthful and vigorous, when the outward man has been in the very arms of Death." To whom I thought Fidelia replied: "O my friend! we have a kind and compassionate Lord; his comforts to me, a poor unworthy creature, are neither few nor small. I may well say, he feedeth me with his grace, and all his paths drop fatness to me. O my friends! my root is in the best soil, and the dew lies all night upon my branches. O let me ever be thankful for that sweet and transporting day, on which I found freedom of soul to rely upon Christ alone for salvation, as he is held forth in the Gospel! Blessed be God for freedom to call the Redeemer my own, and to look up to him in an appropriating way! O the sweetness of the remembrance of it! It bears me down with the delightful weight of humbling love; electing, redeeming, and regenerated love commended itself by the sweetest and most persuasive eloquence unto my heart, and still it is the more endearing, because of its discriminating nature! O it is unspeakable! O the heights and depths! O divine love! Why is it that I, a poor unworthy, hell-deserving sinner, should be found thy favoured object! Amazing and miraculous grace! that ever the great salvation of the adorable Jesus hath laid hold on me, and preached itself into my very heart, notwithstanding I am the basest of all the human creation. Behold, I see the wise, the moral, the rich, and the noble, standing at a distance from the great salvation, and strangers to the pardoning mercy of God; whilst I, the most unworthy of all,

am fed with the comforts of his love. It is thy doing, O thou omnipotent Saviour; and it is marvellous in my eyes: thou lovest merely because thou wilt love, and pardonest only because such is thy good pleasure."

After some time, her friend addressed himself to her as follows: "I perceive, Fidelia, and I am glad to see it, that you do not quarrel with the providence of God, because he hath given you but a scanty measure of worldly substance; you do not seem offended, because you are poor, and have not fortunes to leave your children."

"No, my friend," replied she, "I am not angry; for the Lord doth all things well, and my lot hath been rightly and wisely determined: I would not, on any account, that it had been otherwise than it has been. Whatever beauty others may think there is in growing riches, I must tell you for my own part, that I would not for the world I had been born to be rich; for wherever they come, 'riches are sure to be a burden to the possessor:' therefore, he who well understood the nature of things, says, 'he that increaseth in them doth also increase in sorrow.' I have always found my own corruptions to be burden enough for me, to bear up the hill towards Mount Zion, with a weight of thick clay, however brilliant, on my shoulders."

Here my guide gently jogged me, and said, "This is most excellently judged of Fidelia, for as weights of lead are to the courser, when he runs for the plate, so is gold to the follower of Christ. It is very difficult to possess gold, without loving it; and you may know that the love of money 'is the root of all evil;' insomuch that it is next to impossible for a rich man to be a true and humble Christian.*

In the meanwhile, Fidelia continued, and said, "Had I been full, I might with many others have forgotten my God; but my narrow circumstances have furnished me with many precious opportunities of beholding the goodness of his providence and faithfulness to his promise;

* Within the few years that I have been a professor, I have known many useful members of Gospel churches, utterly spoiled by getting rich. From spiritual, savoury, and sociable brethren, they have dwindled into mere formalists and muckworms, barren fig-trees in the garden of God; and such they are likely to continue, till it is the pleasure of God to revive them again. Many you will find convinced of this doctrine in their judgment, whose affections are altogether unmoved; therefore they compass sea and land to get money, notwithstanding they have the greatest reason to believe, that it will add to their trouble. Yea, although they have many stings of conscience on this account, still they will do what they can to increase it. How absurd is man!

which opportunities I had certainly lost, had I been rich. I think I see such beauty in the unerring dispensations of Providence towards me, that no way so suitable could have been chosen, as the very way which my gracious God hath taken to bring me to himself and his glory. Well may I cry out with the apostle, 'O the depth and riches, both of his wisdom and knowledge!'"

Filled with admiration at the goodness of God, Fidelia stopped here, and Veratio said to me: "It has been, Novitio, the error of many writers, and still more of readers, to suppose, that small entertainment, and but few profitable hints are to be drawn from a state of low life; but if we will make true religion our theme, where must we go to find it? If we inquire at the palace of his grace Elatus, there we see all the pomp of magnificent pride driving on in its lofty career; or if we call at the seat of my lord Ganeo, we are immediately confronted by drunkenness and revelling, and the delicate board, though covered with the most tasteful viands, is altogether destitute of that religion which would prevent it becoming a snare to the owner. It is much more likely, that if in quest of real religion, you will find her with wretched Lazarus at the gate, rather than within the hotel of Dives; for not many wise men after the flesh, not many noble, are called to the possession of true religion: but the poor have the Gospel preached to them; and, amongst the lower class of the people, religion dwells in its greatest power, as you may see in the case of Fidelia, whose mind is overwhelmed with holy joy, even in the midst of her extreme sufferings."

It was now, I thought, that one of her friends asked her, how it was with her as to the comforts of life. To which she replied, "O, my friends, I have all things, and abound: our gracious God hath promised, that our bread shall be given, and our water shall be sure; and to the praise of his providence, I can say, that I have always found the promise verified, for he is a God keeping covenant, and full of faithfulness. This I have always had reason to note, but more especially been sensible of it since the death of my dear Fidelio: since then, I have been necessitated to live by faith on the promises of a provident God. I have been enabled to trust, and never knew the promises to fail, nor the Lord to fall short of any word he hath spoken. How

shall I praise thee, thou God of infinite fulness, who from thine own inexhaustible stores hath richly supplied all my wants! I long to appear before thee, O thou immaculate Redeemer, that I may see thee in the effulgence of thy glory; for here I see darkly as in a glass. Many are the refreshing gales of sweet consolation which I have had in the ordinances of thy grace: but now, when I compare them with that unfathomable depth of undecaying comfort, which I see immediately before me, they are like the small dust of the balance, when compared to the world; or like to the drop of water which hangs at the bucket, when compared to the vast ocean. O the divine blaze of heavenly glory, which already begins to beam upon my soul, even on this wilderness side of Jordan! O thou new and heavenly Jerusalem, I am already overcome with thine excellent beauties! O what must it be when put in full possession! And even now, nothing hinders me from feeding on the fattest of my comforts, but this thin and almost rent vail of mortality. Let it once be rent, as soon as it will, and I shall with unspeakable joy sustain all the stupendous blaze of thy unsullied glories.

"I long, O, I long to join yonder glorious throng, yonder radiant church in the realms above! I long to press into yonder bright assembly, which by faith I see surrounding the eternal throne, that I might mingle my humble notes with their harmonious voices, and with them sing the praise of God and of the Lamb. Hasten thy pace, O ever tardy time? Ye moments swiftly end your destined flight! Lord, shake my glass, that the sands may speedily pass through! But I see, holy and reverend is his name, that there remains but a few particles more in the life-end of my glass, and they will speedily be down; then face to face I shall see the glorious object of my supreme delight, and for ever offer up perfect adoration to him that loved me, and washed me in his blood. With unspeakable delight I shall behold that glorious face which once was marred with shame and spitting. I shall behold him for myself, and not for another. These eyes which have so often turned aside after vanity, these very eyes shall in transport gaze on the King in his beauty, this tongue shall delight to praise him eternity along, and these hands, which once were the instruments of unrighteousness, shall cast at his majestic feet the

glorious crown wherewith this worthless head shall soon be adorned. O happy, happy day, that brings home the longing exile, and lands the weary pilgrim upon the shore of rest, to be ever, ever with the Lord!"

Fidelia finishing here, her friend again said to her:—"My dear sister, I rejoice with you, that the Lord is pleased to indulge you with such a measure of his sensible presence, on this, which otherwise would be a day of severe trial to you; but the Redeemer's presence makes even Death itself not only tolerable, but desirable and easy. But in the midst of your sensible enjoyments, you seem as if you had forgotten your three little children; tell me, Fidelia, have you no uneasiness at the thoughts of leaving them behind you, in a land of sin and sorrow? Would it not, with submission to the divine will, be desirable to you to be spared to see them brought up to a capacity of doing for themselves?"

To whom Fidelia replied: "The Lord hath been a husband to the widow, and I am persuaded he will be a father to the fatherless, and an all-sufficient stay to the helpless orphan. My children are dear, but my Saviour is infinitely dearer to me; and I have got such a taste of the grapes of the heavenly Canaan, that I cannot think of abiding on this wilderness-side of Death. My heart is already gone over, O why do I tarry any longer behind! but the Lord's time is the best. Pray for me, my friends, that I may not offend the best of Beings, by my impatience to be gone, but submissively wait for the dissolving moment." Then her friend tenderly rejoined: "But have your companions in warfare no weight at all upon your mind? Can you with pleasure leave them in this inhospitable world?" She replied: "Alas, my friend! of what service can my presence be to a warfaring church? I can be of no use at all. But I know that he who hath chosen, purchased, and sanctified it, will safely keep it, and every individual member of it, to the perfect day: for of all whom the Father hath given to the Mediator, he hath not lost; he will not lose any thing; no, not the weakest, or the most contemptible; for all shall be gathered safe to his heavenly kingdom."

"Give the immortal love of a dying woman to our fellow-church members, and tell them from me, that it is the last request of their dying friend, that they live at a greater dis-

tance from the world. There is, alas! too much, by far too much, likeness betwixt the precious children of God and the children of the world. Some of them, in a manner very unbecoming, court the fantastical honours, and others seem too eagerly to thirst after the perishing, unsatisfactory riches of this transitory and delusive world, which, if they could obtain, would all lose their beauty on a dying day. O! a dying day gives us clear views of things, and exceedingly diminishes the value of gold and silver. Bid them, therefore, behold the profits and honours of this world with death-bed eyes, then they will readily declare that all is vanity. And others of our friends there are, who but too much delight in the vain and empty pleasures of the flesh, which at best are no more than an ærial dream. But, O! tell them from me, that the honours of life are lighter than chaff, and will all be driven away when Christ comes with his fan in his hand, thoroughly to purge his floor: then my friends, they will appear lighter than nothing, and altogether vanity. O that they could be persuaded, that gold and silver is one of the most dangerous burdens that a Christian possibly can carry; the love of money is the root of all evil. They will never repent when they come to a death-bed, that they are not rich, and cannot leave fortunes for their children. Tell them, that if the Almighty, in his wisdom, sees that riches are for their good, he will, in his benevolence, bestow them without their immoderate care, or without injuring their minds in the least. O, let Christians beware of accounting gain to be godliness. Tell them from me, that the pursuit of worldly pleasure is the certain way to dishonour their God, and destroy the peace of their own souls. O persuade them, as Christians, to seek the things which come from above where the blessed Jesus sitteth at the right hand of God. Let them know, that conformity to the vain customs of the world, is highly injurious to the cause and interest of Christ, and has a natural tendency to harden poor sinners in their rebellion against God. When they come to a death-bed, as I am now, all those names of honour, the applause of mankind, and all the comfort which springs from the possession of riches, will vanish away as empty vapours and smoke. Verily, all things here below are vanity. The divine religion of the ever-loving and ever-

lovely Jesus is the one thing needful—the only thing that will yield satisfaction on a dying day."

Fidelia having exhausted her strength, remained a considerable time silent, and Veratio turned himself toward me, and said,—

"Now, Novitio, this is divine religion with a witness! Here are riches in the midst of poverty; health in the midst of sickness; joy in the midst of pain; and glory rising out of misery. What an exalted soul is this! How much of heaven is now let down into this blessed cottage! How glorious, how excellent, is thy religion, O thou amiable Saviour of mankind! blessed is he, the life of whose soul is the only-begotten of the Father!

"Know, my friend, that Fidelia was daughter to a worthy tradesman, named Philalethes, one who was a constant lover and a punctual observer of truth, as all that dealt with him would readily testify. Philalethes was parent to a numerous offspring, whom he carefully instructed in the principles of religion. As soon as his tender infants began to lisp forth their innocent and childlike prattlings, he used to deal with them as rational creatures, and studied to impress their minds with a sense of the greatness and omnipresence of God; particularly of the purity of his nature, and his utter aversion to sin. It was his constant custom to maintain regularly, at a certain hour twice a-day, the worship of God in his family, at which he took care that no business, however urgent, should hinder the attendance of either children or servants; accounting it his honour, as he found it his pleasure, to go before his family in the worship of their Maker. And well knowing that the Almighty delighteth more in the gates of Zion than in all the dwellings of Jacob, he carefully led his whole family duly to attend the public worship of God, during which he accustomed his children, from their youngest years, to a decent and becoming gravity in the house of prayer. He suffered no part of the holy Sabbath to be devoted to vain amusement or worldly business: the morning thereof was chiefly employed in divine worship, and in putting his family in mind of the solemnity of the sanctuary service which they were to enter upon; and in the evening his care was to improve the sermons which they had heard, and administer suitable instructions to the various branches of his family, according

to their several capacities. He greatly confided in that word of promise: 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.' Prov. xxii. 6. And although he perfectly knew that he could not give them grace, he believed it his duty to inure them to the form of religion. Encouraged by the promise, and well knowing that human endeavours avail but little without divine influence, he was a fervent wrestler* with God for the blessing, and had the pleasure of seeing that his endeavours and prayers were not in vain; as his family, even from their younger years, were properly restrained from the fashionable vices which corrupt our youth, and were perfect strangers to the brilliance of a ball, and the irreligious entertainment of a theatre. In the disposal of his children in marriage, he was not so careful about worldly advantages, as he was strictly nice in his inquiries, whether there was a likeness in their natural disposition, the visible appearance of real grace in the soul, and a harmony in their religious sentiments; for he well knew, that unless husband and wife were of the same opinion, both with regard to doctrine and manner of worship, there is but little prospect of that union which is so essential to mutual happiness. Fidelia he married to a worthy young man of but a small fortune, whose name was Fidelio, a mechanical tradesman, who in their younger years sustained such losses in trade, as reduced him to the necessity of supporting his family by the labour of his hands; and no labour he thought too hard to support his wife and children, whom he so tenderly loved. But, as one says in a certain place, it sometimes happens to a righteous person according to the desert of the wicked; so it happened to Fidelia, for it pleased the Lord, a few years since, to take her husband away from her at a very short notice, to possess the heavenly diadem to which he was appointed. Her fervent and faithful friend, her diligent provider being gone, she found herself in a melancholy situation, left in an inhospitable world, with three tender and beloved infants, one of whom was but just weaned from the breast. But her God, her faithful God, was the object of her trust. She sensibly felt the stroke, and was humbled under the afflicting dispensation; but never, never was the grieved Fidelia heard to

* Gen. xxxii. 24.

allege, that the Almighty Disposer dealt hardly with her: never was she known, in a way of murmuring and impatience, to say unto God, 'What dost thou?'

"On the other hand, she was careful to know whether she had not purchased the affliction to herself by an over-esteem for, and too much dependance on her husband; thereby withholding her heart from, and infringing her duty of full dependance on God. In the times of her deepest distress she was wont thus to reason: 'I know, yea, I am fully persuaded that the Lord afflicteth not willingly; there must be necessity for it, ere he is pleased to apply the rod.' Instead of mourning as one without hope, her principal care was, that the dispensation might be sanctified to her advantage and growth in grace, that she might live more upon, and rest more fully in the Saviour who died for her. Fidelia was a woman who well knew how to plead a promise in the time of need; she was always but weak in body, but a powerful wrestler at the throne of grace; she was shy in courting, and modest in receiving favours from man; but at the throne of God she was importunate, and would not take a denial. Her circumstances being very low after the death of her husband, she was brought to the necessity of living by faith in a promising God, even for her and her children's daily sustenance, which I assure you, is far from being the easiest part of the exercise of faith.

"Distressed Fidelia used to comfort herself in reflecting upon the regard which Jehovah has expressed towards the poor and needy, and especially his declaring himself 'to be a husband to the widow, a father to the fatherless, and a stay to the helpless orphan;' and thus she was wont to reflect within herself: 'The glorious God, who hath seen it meet to take away my husband, hath graciously promised to be a husband to me himself; and if he will be my husband, as he hath said, he will surely act the part of the best of husbands. The husband's part is to direct, defend, and provide for his spouse; and all this the Lord hath promised he will do for the widow who trusts in him. This is agreeable to the tenour of the promises in general, and in particular, to that salutary word on which he has caused me to hope, where he hath declared himself a sun and a shield to his people. Here is light to lead and direct; here is

heat to influence and quicken me in all my languor; and here is a shield for safety, a shield of protection from all enemies, outward and inward; he addeth, I will give grace to support under, and to sanctify afflictions; and, when the work is finished, he says, I will give glory. This life is indeed a life of infinite wants, but here is provision made for them all; for it is added, 'I will withhold no good thing.' This is an ample provision made for all my necessities. Great as they are, the grace of the promise is infinitely greater. Here is consolitary supply for the most desolate widow. I will therefore trust in the Lord, and not be afraid; and so trusting I shall never be confounded, nor shall my my hope be put to shame. This is the ground of all my confidence: he encourages the boldness of the weak, the poor and needy; but abhors the timidity of the unbelieving. None are ever condemned for trusting in the Lord with a holy boldness, in proportion to their necessities: my necessities are great; therefore, O Lord, may my trust in thee be strong.'

"It was thus she communed with her own heart, in profitable reflections upon the promises of God. She was likewise accustomed early to tell her children, that now they had no natural father, to provide for and dispose of them; but that God had declared himself 'the Father of the fatherless,' and she hoped that he would be a Father to them. Earnestly did she recommend them to the grace and protection of the divine Shepherd, who bears the lambs on his arm, and nourisheth them in his bosom. She prayed, and she hoped that God would be the guardian of their infant years, train them up in his own fear, nature, and admonition, provide for them things necessary, and dispose of them to the glory both of his providence and grace. Thus her daily prayers were unto the Lord, and to him were all her cares committed; nothing doubting, but in the unbounded beneficence of his nature, he would take special care of her and her's.

"She lived in a constant reliance on the providence and promises of God, and was never disappointed, notwithstanding her faith was frequently tried as with fire; and now she is dying, could I paint to you the holy joys of her elevated soul, if you were to be possessed of all the wealth in the Indies, Novitio, you would willingly part with it, if it

were possible that you could exchange your condition for such as hers. An explicit narration of Fidelia's experience, would be of more use to the church of Christ, than the voluminous, elaborate works of many learned doctors, who have not had the same experience; for there hath been more religion in one week of her life, than in thirty years preaching of some who are called masters in Israel. And now, Novitio, that you may know that God is not ashamed of the meanest of his saints, I have a mind once more to give you a view of the immaterial world; thereby you will see, that the angels of God do not despise her because of her poverty."

This said, he again, in his usual manner, so strengthened my visual ray, that instantly I saw the place was filled with the heavenly hosts, who unweariedly ministered to the dying woman; and she, notwithstanding in the embraces of Death, was so transported with holy joy, that she forgot the pains of dying. So fervently glowed the seraphic flame in her heart, and in such profusion the joys of approaching eternity were poured into her soul, that all sensation of pain seemed to be gone. By this time the lamp of nature only glimmered in the socket, she lay supinely stretched on her bed, longing and waiting for the dissolving moment, and so long as her voice continued articulate, she dispensed instructions to her friends, adoring the riches of electing, redeeming, and regenerating love. At last, perceiving that nature's sparks were almost extinguished, with eyes sublimely elevated, and holy triumph smiling in her countenance, with a voice which could scarcely be heard, she said, "Come, Father, come; thou knowest I am waiting thy command."—These were her last words, and in a few moments after she quickly departed, and her glorified soul joined in fellowship with the ministers of heaven, formerly her invisible attendants. Now swift as thought they carried her to the blissful regions of eternal day: where she was received with joyful acclamations by all the host of the heaven of heavens: and the ever-adorable Redeemer pronounced her blessed, saying, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord, thou hast been faithful over a few things, therefore thou shalt be a ruler over many." On which I thought a crown of righteousness was put upon her head by the pierced hand of the Redeemer; a palm of triumph given to her, and or-

ders issued to put her in possession of the mansions near the jasper throne; where she strove to outdo Magdalene in praise, and to exalt her voice even above that of Mary, the mother of our Lord. Here was emulation without anger, the most earnest contention without any tincture of pride. Who should be least in their own esteem; who should most glorify and exalt sovereignly free and distinguishing grace, were the springs of all their heavenly debates. Here Manasseh vied with the sweet singer of Israel, the man after God's own heart; the crucified thief, with Enoch and Abraham; Ruth, the Moabitess, with Deborah, the mother of Israel; Jairus, the jailor, contended with Paul the apostle; and babes from the womb claimed right to sing louder than Solomon the wisest of men. Here parents strove to surpass their children, and children to exceed the praises of their parents; masters their former servants, and servants their masters; ministers their people, and people their ministers: and every one urged his claim by rational and consistent arguments. As I was listening to the sweet contention, and gazing on the unutterable glories of the heavenly world, my beloved sleep departed, the unwelcome morning rushed in upon me, and bereaved me of the precious delights I had enjoyed in the night. So I awoke to disappointment and sorrow, finding myself still in the tents of Kedar, possesseed as heretofore of that unclean nature whence every evil to me proceeds, and still to go burdened and groaning because of a body of Death, whilst in this tabernacle. Yea, after all, perhaps to be tired of this world, and yet afraid to venture into another.

PRIESTCRAFT DEFENDED.

A SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY THE EXPULSION

OF

SIX YOUNG GENTLEMEN

FROM

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

FOR

PRAYING, READING, AND EXPOUNDING THE SCRIPTURES:

HUMBLY DEDICATED TO

MR. V*** C****R AND THE H**DS OF H***S,

BY THEIR HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE SHAVER.

THE PREFACE

TO

THE CANDID READER.

You must know, my friend, that I am a gentleman in the country, and by craft a Shaver of very considerable scope; notwithstanding, I have turned preacher of late, and seem to be pretty successful at my preachment, as the sale of this sermon will testify. I have been a great man for the news, as we Shavers commonly are, and, among other papers, I usually took in the St. James's Chronicle; a paper that is filled in all the four corners: but if you ask, with what? on my word, I must refer you to people of greater penetration. Well, I paid and I read to no purpose for a long while; till at last I chanced to spy, "An Extract of a Letter from Oxford," and I wot it pleased me mightily.

It told us how, that *Six young men were expelled the University, for holding methodistical tenets, and for praying, reading and expounding, the Scriptures in a private house.* Well, thought I, that may work for the good of the church: but then I did not so much approve of the principal crime of those called methodists, being said to be reading and expounding the Scriptures, &c. Thought I, that is going somewhat too far. Could they find nothing worse against them? Could not they have proved them drunkards? or made it evident that they were given to wenching?—(things very common in some places.) Or could they not have convicted the young fellows of having reviled the miracles of Christ and of Moses, that their expulsion might appear the more eligible?

Not long after this, I happened to see another account from *Oxford*, wrote by the Rev. *Dr. Oxoniensis;* and that account made me resolve upon something. For he tells us, that one of the six was formerly a *publican;* another

had been a *blacksmith;* a third, a *barber;* and a fourth had been a *teacher* in a school, under *W——y*.

Well, you must know, my grandfather was a publican; my uncle, a blacksmith; I myself am a shaver, which is by interpretation, a barber; and my eldest son, a promising lad, is designed for a schoolmaster. Therefore, seeing the honours of our family cast down into the puddle, by the arrogance of *Oxonian* priests, I began to grow surly upon it, but did not yet think of preaching. What brought me to that, was, finding, from the learned *Dr. Oxoniensis,* that those young men had preached without orders—then, thought I, I will even have a trial at it myself. Well, you must know, we have a good sort of a fellow to our parson; a gentleman who loves his *bottle and his friend, if it was for a night together;* and there is never a youth in all the parish who will sing a merrier catch, nor tell a prettier story than himself; for he is what ye may call, a merry parson. With him I am pretty familiar, and I thought I would even borrow his Sunday's style, and his orthodox plan; knowing him to be a true churchman; and I would try what I could do at preaching. But I had certainly been disappointed in an audience, if an happy imagination had not befriended me; but no sooner had I bestirred my imagination, than I was wafted from *Clarley-common* to the great hall at *O———d*, before the *V—e C——r*, and the heads of Houses; to whom, after I had mounted the rostrum with the usual formality, I preached the following sermon, the whole world being supposed hearers.

Concerning which sermon I would have it observed:

1. That I pretend not to justify any parts of the conduct of the methodists, besides praying to God, reading and expounding the Scriptures, and singing of hymns, &c.

2. That I censure none of the clergy, but such as are against praying, reading, and expounding the Scriptures and singing hymns.

3. That whoever this coat is found to fit, I would have the gentleman put it on and wear it as his own; assuring himself that it was made for him, and that, though a Shaver, I am his tailor.

4. That perhaps, in gratitude for my great pains, and the new hints given in this sermon, which may cast a light upon ecclesiastical history, the *V—e C——r*, and *Heads of*

Houses, may present me to some good benifice. And they may depend upon it, that I shall *shave* the parishioners as handsomely as any of them.

Thus, reader, I have told you all about it; and have only to add, that after I had, at leisure hours, wrote my sermon fairly out, I carried it to a bookseller, expecting that he would be as fond of it as I was myself; which, I believe, is a *case very common with us* AUTHORS: but he drew up his shoulders, looked sour upon it, and said, he feared it was too coarse for this polite age. I assured him that the style was quite clerical, being borrowed from the parish-priest, and what he might hear in many pulpits, if he would only travel for it; but he, being of the saving order, and not over fit for travelling in deep roads, agreed to take my word; rather than be at the expense and trouble of seeking farther proof; so it was sent to the press, to furnish you my friend, with half an hour's entertaiment, and please

Your humble servant,

THE SHAVER.

A SERMON, &c.

HAVING the honour of addressing so learned a body, with bands so white, gowns so black, and caps so orthodox, I take the liberty of striking a little from the common road of preaching; and, as this is a singular occasion, I shall make free with a singular text.

You know, my beloved, it is the way of most preachers to choose some passage of Scripture for their text, which, having distinctly read twice over, you hear no more of the Bible till the sermon is finished; but are entertained with such a lecture as you may find in a newspaper, price threepence.—But I have the honour of departing a little from this general rule, and shall be the first who takes his text from a newspaper, and illustrates his doctrine by Scripture history; and having broken the ice, as we used to say, I expect to have many ingenious followers. You will find our text in the St. James's Chronicle for Thursday, March 17, 1763, No. 1099, printed by Henry Baldwin, at the printing-office, Whitefriars, Fleet Street: wherein, if you will pull your newspapers out of your pockets, you may read with me the following paragraph:

Extract of a Letter from Oxford.

"*On* Friday *last, six Students, belonging to* Edmund Hall, *were* expelled *the University, after a hearing of several hours before Mr. Vice-Chancellor and some of the Heads of Houses, for holding methodistical tenets, and taking upon them to pray, read, and expound the Scriptures, and singing hymns in a private house. The —— of the —— defended their doctrines from the thirty-nine Articles of the established church, and spoke in the highest terms of the piety and exemplariness of their lives; but his motion was over-ruled, and sentence pronounced against them. Dr. ——, one of the Heads of Houses present, observed, that, as these six gentlemen were expelled for having too much religion, it would be very proper to inquire into the*

conduct of some who had too little; and Mr.—was heard to tell their chief accuser, that the University was much obliged to him for his good work."

Our text is indeed somewhat long; but then, my beloved, we have the more matter to work upon: and you know this is a day in which invention is not very brisk, especially among the gentlemen clergy. But,

We proceed to prosecute our subject after the old orthodox plan; namely,

I. To go over our text, by way of explication.

II. Deduce a notable point of doctrine from it; viz. That this act of the V—e-C——r, and the Heads of Houses, is defensible from the conduct of the clergy, in all ages and in all countries.

III. Conclude with a special application.

I. Explain our text. In doing which, I must divide it into very small parcels, even as the skilful surgeon does the flesh of a hanged malefactor, when he dissects an organ. And in the first place,

Extract of a Letter from Oxford.

This *Oxford*, my beloved, is a city in the West of England, notable for a great university, *i. e.* a place for learning; and it would do you good to see the numbers of hopeful young gentlemen, who come from all parts of England, in pursuit of learning; insomuch, that all the colleges are frequently crowded. But you will say, What do they learn? To which I answer in the negative, as being much easier than the affirmative; for it appears from our text, that there are some things which they do not learn.

(1.) Praying:—I mean, they do not, in common, learn to pray to God. It seems this is no part of the approved exercises of the students in that university; for, says our text, "Six young gentlemen were expelled the university for praying." From whence we may draw this inference; namely, That if the Vice-Chancellor, and the Heads of Houses, expelled these six offenders for praying to God, it is natural to suppose, that they are not guilty of that crime themselves; otherwise, they would fall under that reproof. Rom. ii. 1.

(2.) To read and expound the Scripture is another thing which seems to be there prohibited. Whether Rochester's Poems, Tristram Shandy, The Minor, and such books, are esteemed orthodox, and therefore tolerated, I pretend not to say; but one thing is clear from the text, That reading and expounding the Scriptures is against the *Oxonian* law: for *Six young gentlemen were* expelled *the university for reading and expounding the Scriptures.*

(3.) Singing of hymns, is another thing which they do not learn; this is also clear from the words. By singing of hymns, I mean, praising of God for blessings received, according to Col. iii. 16. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." But singing of psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, cannot be connived at in the university by the Heads of Houses; for *Six young men were* expelled *the university for singing of hymns.*

Note. This was an extract of a *letter* from Oxford; which shews that there be some people there who *can* write, notwithstanding all the reflections that have been cast upon them; and that, although reading is dangerous there, yet an *Oxonian* may write with impunity.

2. *Last Friday.*—The better day, the better deed. Friday, you know, is a fast-day; on which it was fittest to go about a work of this importance, when the judgment was not fettered with bodily grossness, but purged by an empty belly.

Last Friday.—It was not a thing that happened in the dark ages of *monkish ignorance*, but what has happened in this *enlightened age of Christianity.* It was not when the university was tied hand and foot by *popish* prejudices, and the Heads of Houses were obliged to submit to their betters; but it was *last Friday*, the act and deed of *protestant divines.*

3. *Six Students!*—What a miracle was it, my beloved, that out of so many hundreds of students as are at Oxford, only *Six* should be found guilty of praying, reading, and expounding the Scriptures! This shews the faithfulness of their vigilant tutors, in guarding them against such pernicious practices. Now, from this, observe,

First, That there were but six students of all the university, who could be detected in those evils of praying, &c. much to the honour of that learned body.

Secondly, That those six being expelled—now there are none left in all the colleges, who take upon them to pray, read, and expound the Scriptures; therefore, gentlemen may with safety send their sons to that fountain of learning without fearing that they will become religious; there being none left now to ensnare them.

4. They all belonged to *Edmund Hall.*—It seems they loved to be together; from whence it may be gathered, that they loved one another; a fault which the heathens accused the Christians of old with, but from which mankind in general are now pretty free. It appears as if this *Edmund Hall* was the only place at Oxford in which praying people were to be found. But it is hoped that the governors at that Hall will be mulct for their carelessness in suffering the students to read the Bible and to inquire after religion, seeing it is contrary to the sense of this university.

5. *Were expelled the university.*—Deprived of the rights and privileges of the king's loving subjects; or, as the word signifies, they were drove out, forced away, and banished from the university. This religious act was performed by the Vice-Chancellor, after a hearing of several hours. I remember when bishop Hooper was sent for by queen Mary, the pious bishop of London and my Lord-Chancellor, the guides of her conscience, being determined to have him burnt, they thought to make a shew of justice by giving him a hearing, withal resolving not to swerve from their bloody design. So, in like manner, our venerable tutors were determined not to suffer *praying persons* to breathe the university air; yet being tied to form, they would give them a hearing.

A hearing of several hours.—Ah! my beloved, ye may see how remarkably the Scriptures are fulfilled, in that learned body of divines, where it says, "Hear ye indeed, but understand not; see ye indeed, but perceive not."

6. We come to the crime for which they were expelled the university; and I wot it was a heinous crime indeed. This would appear without illustrating it, from the character of the expellers; namely, Mr. Vice-Chancellor and the Heads of Houses. But, as I love to remove every hil-

lock out of the way for your better information, I shall explain it. What was their crime then, my beloved, think you? Was it drinking? No, no, it was not drinking; *for they were very temperate.* Was it for whoring then, the common practice of many students? No, it was not for whoring neither; for their lives are said to have been *very exemplary.* I wish, my beloved, it had been no worse. But what was it then? Was it swearing and fighting, and abusing their fellow-students? No; for they shunned the other students, as a wise man will *shun an attorney.*—Thus much may be gathered from our text, which intimates, *that they met together among themselves.* But it was *praying: that*, my beloved, was one part of their crime.—Six *young men were* expelled *the university for praying.* For Mr. V—e-C——r, and the Heads of Houses, will suffer no praying people to continue in the university.

Reading and expounding the Scriptures was another part of the crime; but what, in the name of the pope, can students have to do with the Scriptures? What a pity it is that the Bible is not locked up in the Vatican! But letting that pass, we find that learning to expound the Scriptures, is no part of the employment of the students:—*Six young men being* expelled *the university for reading and expounding the Scriptures.*

What added to their guilt was, that they carried their religion to a *private house.* But what can *private* people have to do with religion? Ought not they to do as their forefathers did; namely, give up their consciences and understandings to the guidance of their venerable priests? Is it not enough that gentlemen in black know and understand religion, but every private person must be dabbling in it, contrary to the sense of this university? I wot, my beloved, that the clergy cannot thrive as they do, if every private house must become a worshipping temple; but it is thought there is little reason to fear this, seeing our text informs us, that the doctors of the university are determined to do what they can to prevent it; for *Six young men were* expelled *the university, for being religious in a private house.*

7. Another part of their crime was, that they *held methodistical tenets.* The name methodist, my beloved, is a cramp word, gathered out of old books by men of reverence and learning, and applied to such who pray, read,

expound the Scriptures, and sing hymns in private houses, a people never to be tolerated by the clergy. You'll observe that this same hard word, which the nation has long rang with, first of all was given to the sons of Esculapius, as a name of honour, and about thirty years ago, was by learned men raised up, as the witch of Endor (who seems to have been a clergywoman too) raised the ghost of old Samuel.

Those same sons of Esculapius were physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries in their day; but then they were quite immethodical, like the greater part of the old women in black prunello and white cambric. For instance, they had not the method of wearing large wigs, gold-headed canes, and of wheeling about the streets in their chariots. And with respect to their physic and surgery, they were guided chiefly by the dictates of nature, without the abstruse methods of art. At last there arose a great man, and his name was *Galen*, a mighty man for dissecting of apes; for it ought to be observed, that in his days, in Pagan lands, there were very few criminals who deserved death, and fewer still who were given to the surgeons. Well, what should he do, think you? Why, my beloved, being blessed with better stars at his nativity than his predecessors, he took their confused and immethodical practices, and reduced them into method, *i. e.* form and order. Well, this great man being principal of the College of Physicians, he taught his pupils to observe orderly rules, otherwise *method*, from whence his disciples were in honour called methodists. So much for learning; now for doctrine.

Then, my beloved, the case stands thus: Amongst the clergy, there always have been a great number who did not love praying, singing of hymns, reading and expounding the Scriptures; the like may be said of the students. What they aimed at, was a good living without much work; and as one in a certain place says, "Those men care not if the devil take the flock, provided they have but the fleece.', On the other hand, there have been some who loved to pray' to sing hymns, to read and expound the Scriptures; who, if they were not permitted to do it in public houses or churches, would do it in private houses, to the no small disgrace of the other gentlemen. Well, my beloved, these are they who have been called methodists, fanatics, and

enthusiasts. Now a word or two about their tenets, and then I dismiss this head; for really their tenets, being destructive of priestcraft, must by no means be encouraged.

First and foremost, they think that a man ought to attest no article of faith, but what he believes to be true.

2. They think that a man ought not to profess to my lord bishop, that he believes all the thirty-nine articles of the established church to be the true faith of the Gospel, when he secretly believes in his heart that they are false and methodistical.

3. They think that a man should not profess to his lordship, that he is moved by the Holy Ghost to desire the office of a deacon, when he is, in fact, moved with the hopes of a benefice, and considers it in his heart as a delusion and enthusiasm, for any man to pretend to be moved by the Holy Ghost in these days.

4. They think that after a man has subscribed to the thirty-nine articles, and solemnly swore that he believes them, that he should not go and preach doctrines directly opposite to the said articles.

5. They think that no man ought to be permitted to enter the pulpit, whose life and conversation is *dissolute.*

These, with a great many tenets besides, equally ridiculous to maintain, and therefore, though tolerated by the king and parliament, the Heads of Houses will never endure them in the university.

8. *The —— of the —— defended their doctrine by the thirty-nine articles of the established church.*

I wot, I fear me much, that this doctor is himself tinctured with methodistical tenets; for nobody, now-a-day, besides methodists, considers these thirty-nine articles of the established church as any test of doctrine: as for the clergy, it is well known that they are mostly *dissenters* from the doctrine of the articles and prayer-book. Ah! beloved, if the truth was known, it would be found that this same doctor Dixon prays to God, and reads his Bible; or how else should he take part with those young men whom the Heads of Houses expelled the university, *for praying, reading, and expounding the Scriptures?* Besides, he would not have spoken so highly of their piety and the exemplariness of their lives, as the text tells us he did, seeing the sense of the university was, that their praying, reading,

&c. was vicious. I fear me, my beloved, that if the Heads of Houses do not keep a good *look out* after this same doctor, it will be difficult for them to keep the university clear from such as pray, and read and expound the Scriptures; but *his motion was over-ruled.* What is one methodist amongst a host of divines?

9. *Dr.——, one of the Heads of Houses present, observed, that as these Six gentlemen were* expelled *for having too much religion, it would be very proper to inquire into the conduct of some who had too little.* From this part of our text, it appears, that the several crimes alleged against them, amounted in the aggregate to a being *righteous overmuch;* which the learned Dr. Trapp, of crabbed memory, has very piously shewn to be an evil, almost unpardonable. According to the Rev. Dr. Nowel's learned answer to that profane son of our Alma Mater, called *Pietas Oxoniensis,* it is evidently much more safe, and less impious, to ridicule the miracles of Moses and of Christ, than to pray in private houses without book. The eloquent orator of the university gives a full account of the case of Mr. W——ng, a friend of his oratorship's, who was charged upon oath with the above-said contempt of the Scriptures, and ridicule of the miracles of Moses and Christ. The proofs were so point blank against the said Rev. Mr. W——ng, that his reverence could not deny the charge. Well then, what was the issue? Was he expelled? No, my beloved; he was not expelled. Q. "Why was he not expelled?" Ans. "His reverence pleaded his being *drunk* when he uttered those contemptful words against the miracles of Moses and of Christ;" *i. e. The* candidate *for holy orders* was drunk *when he ridiculed revealed religion;* and yet he got into orders; and yet he continues a member of the university! There is a vulgar proverb, indeed, which says, "What a man thinks when he is sober, he speaks out when he is drunk." Whether this is applicable to parson W——ng, we pretend not to say; but this we are certain of, Had the six methodists ventured to pray to God when they were drunk, they had been expelled for it when they were sober.

But the *sweet-spirited* V—e-C——r, received Mr. W——ng's penance favourably, and good reason why, for he was never charged by any body with the heinous crime of praying to God off book in private houses; or that would

have ruffled the V—e-C——r's spirit to the ejection of parson W—ll—ng.

In the same affair, related by the Rev. Dr. Nowel, it is plain that private religious assemblies, alias conventicles, are in much less esteem at Oxford, than tap-houses and taverns: for the six methodists were expelled for praying in a conventicle, but the Rev. Mr. W——ng *could get drunk in a tap-house*, and yet continued a member of the university. Nor can this be denied, unless the public orator should eat his words; otherwise shew from good and authentic records, that members of that learned body do occasionally get drunk within their own peculiar districts.

But let us pass on to the absurdity of this doctor's proposals, *To inquire into the conduct of those who had too little religion;* as if that should be deemed a crime! Would this doctor have the colleges to stand empty, think you? But we learn that this motion was overruled; the V—e-C——r and Heads of Houses did not think proper to come into it; from which, after-ages will have a very respectable idea of the present piety of that learned body.

Thus, my beloved, I have gone through the first part of my plan, and shall proceed to the second.

II. Namely, to rise a notable point of doctrine from it; which is this, *viz.* That the conduct of the Heads of Houses in expelling the six young men for praying, reading and expounding the Scriptures, is defensible, from the conduct of the clergy of all ages and countries, whatsoever snarling parsons may say.

To clear this, I shall produce four instances; most of which I shall take out of that old antiquated book, called the Scriptures; a book which sets forth the true spirit of the university doctors to the very life.

The first of these instances we have in the book of Daniel, chap. iii. wherein some transactions of the doctors of the established church at Babylon are recorded; concerning which I would make the following notes.

1. That the religion, by law established, was the religion of the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar, at the request of the clergy, made and set up in the plains of Dura. A place, my beloved, which, if we may give credit to travellers, very much resembles the plains of Oxford.

2. The clergy, who you know have always been very

fond of a *golden god*, would by no means suffer an act of toleration to be passed in favour of methodists and dissenters; but on the contrary, got an act of parliament on their own side, enjoining the strictest uniformity in religion, and threatening death to all dissenters. It seems this prince was too easy; and like some of our former princes in England, was so much afraid of the clergy, that he was obliged to conform, and so espoused an act of uniformity, which the clergy hoped would bring good grist to their mill, verse 6.

3. This law established, the clergy were very impatient to have the subjects of this great king brought to the test; which they thought best to do by appointing a public feast, on which it is required that every man and mother's son should fall down before, and worship this golden god set up by the king, as the tool of the parsons.

4. That there were four degrees of learned men, who, I suppose, dwelt in the university at Babylon. First, there were *magicians* with them, the same as doctors of divinity are with us in our universities here: secondly, there were *astrologers*, or men of learned sciences, much the same with our masters of arts: thirdly, there were *sorcerers*, who, I suppose, were either fellows of the college, or bachelors of arts, appointed to be tithe gatherers: and, fourthly, there were *Chaldeans*, or students of their divinity, and other fine arts:—And,

5. That all those gentry were very vigilant in discovering and informing against dissenters: ver. 8. "Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near and accused the Jews." That is to say, certain young students, being spurred on to it by their tutors, who cared not to appear in such a dirty affair themselves, and so forth, by which they appear to have been rather more honourable than the reverend tutor of *E——d Hall.*

6. Strict as the law was, there were some who took upon them to pray to God, like those six young gentlemen who were expelled the university for praying. But what were they, think you? why truly, they were dissenters and methodists; for they would not conform to the Babylonish prayer-book, and other forms of worship by law established, therefore were dissenters: and they were methodists, if praying to God, and refusing to pin his faith on the sleeve of the parson's gown, denominates a man

a methodist. But what followed trow ye? Why, as soon as they were found out to be nonconformists, the clergy accused them of rebellion; and had the king been as fond of burning dissenters as their reverences were, these men had in a trice been executed, without having another chance for their lives. But he was not quite so fiery, but gave them another trial, and strove to bring them over to the church by gentleness, intermixed with severity; the gentleness was his, and the severity belonged to their reverences. But the methodists continued obstinate, and at last overcome the parsons. If you'll read the chapter through, you'll see the upshot of it, and how the doctors of the university were confounded, and the dissenters readmitted to the king's favour; for God did work for them.

I pass on to the days of *Darius*, a prince who had a praying nobleman for his first minister of state, and, for aught I know to the contrary, he might be first lord of the treasury, as well as chancellor of the empire. His name was Daniel, and by birth a Jew. Well, my beloved, being so very great, he was grievously envied by the inferior placemen, though they kept it secret, and spoke him fair to his face; and he was very much abused by those who were out of place. If we may judge of ancient things from what appears in ages more modern, we may suppose that the times took a turn something like the following:

One man cries out against his being a favourite, and too intimate with the queen, or queen's mother, as their kinsmen do upon similar occasions: another complains of his being a foreigner, and a captive, so highly dignified, whilst the natives were neglected. Perhaps their newspapers might be stuffed with clamours against the exotic favourite: and the incensed mob might be taught to cry out, Liberty and Babylon for ever—but no Jew—no favourite—no captive. Well, my beloved, all the *inns* and *outs* might have fretted themselves to death, without being able to do any thing against this prime minister, this same Daniel, the king's favourite, if they had not applied to the principal clergy, the Heads of Houses. But I trow, the reverend doctors, the magicians, the masters of the art of astrology, &c. &c. no sooner embarked in the popular cause, but they were more than a match for the favourite, who had fallen by means of their reverences, if the Almighty had had as little

to do with them, as he has to do with the greatest part of the clergy.

Well, my beloved, the Heads of Houses and the disaffected statesmen met all together, and consulted which was the best way to overturn the state of this praying favourite. But the conduct of Daniel was so exemplary, that they knew they should be able to find nothing wrong in him, unless they could entrap him in matters of religion; therefore, having first persuaded the king that *the church was in danger*, they urged the necessity of a law being made, prohibiting any man's praying to God. Well, Darius the king was not such a novice in politics, but he knew the necessity of having the clergy on his side; and therefore, though he could not see into that part of their mysterious divinity, made the decree according to the plan concerted by that learned body.

But it is thought that he would have strained a point with them, if he had known that they were aiming at the life of his faithful favourite.

But how stiff these biblists are! For this Daniel went on praying to God, reading and expounding the Scriptures *in a private house*, notwithstanding the king had, under the direction of the clergy, ordained otherwise. This was enough to have provoked the *Heads of Houses to have expelled him the university*, had he belonged to it; but he not belonging to it, they were obliged to be satisfied with putting him to death without expelling him.

Now, lest any should object to the clergy having the honour of devising this scheme, because there is no notice taken of them in the history, let it be observed, that it was never known that many great men or noblemen were ever given to interfere in religious matters; statesmen, in all ages, have been wise enough to take up with the religion which the priests have prescribed to them: therefore, what you give of honour to any body in this affair, let it be given to the clergy. And I pass on to make a comparison betwixt that affair and this before us.

1. They could find no occasion of fault in Daniel; so it was with the six young men who were expelled the university, for their lives were said to be *pious and exemplary*.

2. They thought they might entrap him in some matters concerning the law of his God. So likewise these young

men, though they were no whoremasters, no gamblers, no drunkards, no Scripture-revilers, &c. yet they could be entrapped in matters relating to their God.

3. This same Daniel, notwithstanding the penalty denounced in the edict against any who should take upon them to pray to God, perversely, rebelliously, and obstinately persisted in his usual apostolical, puritanical, nonconformistical, and methodistical manner of praying to God in a private house. Soon, no doubt, but these six young men knew it was against the Heads of Houses, &c. that any of the students under their care should pray to God in a private house, or even pray without book in a public house; for says our text, "Six young men were expelled the university for praying, reading and expounding the Scriptures in a private house;" yet they persisted in it.

Lastly, under this head. Daniel, president of the princes, kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God as aforetime. But how will you be able to find such puritanic conduct among our British noblemen?—for I wot that a praying nobleman is pretty near as great a rarity as a white crow upon Malvern hills. If outward conduct is to determine inward sentiments, it may be concluded, that most of our people of fashion consider themselves either as immortal, or as on a level with the beasts, destitute of rational souls.

The second instance of clerical conduct which gives countenance to the late act of the Heads of Houses, I shall bring from the clergy of that famous university at Jerusalem in the days of Christ and his apostles. In the established church of Judea, there were articles of faith and a canon law, which all the clergy professed to believe, regard, and defend. This confession of faith was first compiled by Moses, the founder of that church; and afterwards ratified and confirmed by Ezra and Nehemiah, their two principal reformers; even as the thirty-nine articles of the established church were ratified and confirmed by our English reformers. I know you will be ready to think that the clergy deemed it an honour to tread in the steps of those pious reformers; but I trow, my beloved, ye are greatly mistaken; for the *Heads of Houses* of the university at Jerusalem, even did as many others have done since, make the commandment void to establish their own tradi-

tions. Perhaps you will be ready to startle, like the cows in July, when bit by the envious flies, when you hear of an university at Jerusalem; but I assure you that it was there that the doctors (*i. e.* teachers) of the law dwelt, and their law was their divinity. Now, where do the neighbouring dogs delight to resort so much as to the place where the carcass is? Or where shall we see such swarms of reverend doctors as at the university? Those pharisees, those lawyers, those scribes, and those doctors were all gownsmen; but whether they wore the same uniforms with the gentlemen of *Oxford* university, my author does not say. Yet this much may be gathered from the history, that if that wandering Jew, who they say has lived ever since the time I am speaking of, should chance in his travels to call at Oxford, he would think upon his longevity, from the manners of the men that it was old Jerusalem risen again from its ruins, and that the ancient scribes and pharisees, &c. were all risen from the dead. But we will drop this, and come to the matter in hand, which is, to give a just account of those clergy, that you may see that the Heads of Houses have not departed a jot from the rules of their clerical ancestors.

The Jerusalem clergy finding that their living depended upon subscribing the articles given by Moses, and the homilies compiled by the prophets, they could, for the sake of a venerable reputation and a fattish living, or as ye would say, *for the good of the church*, very readily subscribe and attest them upon oath, notwithstanding many of them, called sadducees, did not believe any thing about them. Now, not to take any notice of the vulgar opinion, namely, that there are a great many sadducees in our universities, I cannot but observe the weakness of those who blame such of the clergy who swear to articles they do not believe, seeing that was practised by the clergy of the first established church that was in the world.

About something more than 1700 years since, there arose some dissenters, who made a great stir among the people, and brought great uneasiness upon the clergy. I do not mean that those were dissenters from the articles of faith which were of old given to the saints; but they were dissenters from the clergy, and did not spare to detect their errors, both in principles and practice; a practice which

our modern methodists are said to be guilty of, to the great concern of the Heads of Houses.

Those were laymen, not regularly educated at the university, and who took upon them to preach without receiving authority from the archbishop of Jerusalem; I think his name was Caiaphas, and I wot he was primate of all Judea. Well, those men were not only laymen, but even the riff-raff of them, even fishermen: note, they were not attornies, or merchant's clerks; nor were they chymists, nor were they apothecaries, but fishermen. And yet they prayed extempore, and yet they preached, and yet they expounded the Scriptures to the great confusion of the holy trade of priestcraft. The established church was now thought to be in danger. And how could it be thought so, was something strange, seeing those praying and preaching dissenters proved all their doctrines from the articles and homilies given by Moses and the prophets, even as our modern methodists prove their doctrine from the articles and homilies of the church of England; and the church of England has been thought in no small danger from these same methodists upon grounds equally substantial. Believe me, my beloved, the learned, the zealous Doctor Sacheverel, was not the first nor the last, who was grieved for the church. But he is dead and gone, therefore I return to the clergy at Jerusalem; and ye cannot but remember how active they were in procuring the destruction of Jesus Christ, and when he was risen from the dead, and ascended into glory, they abated nothing of their zeal for their established church. For no sooner were they aware of the power of the apostles' doctrine (by the apostles I mean those who took upon them to pray, read and expound the Scriptures in private houses, as you may see in the subsequent parts of the history) as these six young men who were expelled the university are said to have done. Seeing, I say, their extraordinary fervour in preaching, they cried out against them as persons drunk with new wine, by which we may understand *enthusiasm*, Acts ii. 13. Well, my beloved, this is the very cry of the clergy against all such as preach Jesus and the resurrection, and from their mouths the vulgar catch the sound; so with many, a methodist and an enthusiast, a dissenter and a fanatic, are thought to be synonimous terms. From hence we may learn, that a slan-

der may as well be thrown out in a sermon as in a farce, and will issue with as good a grace from a pulpit as from a theatre. But no more of this, because our time draws towards the other end.

It is very remarkable, how zealous those gentlemen of the gown, who aim no higher than a good fat benefice, have always shewed themselves when the doctrine of Christ in its simplicity hath been preached; for why? Truly, because it lays the axe to the root of the tree of priestcraft, and throws down the importance of the parson into the dirt.—If the clergy were to observe the rules given by Christ to his disciples in his sermon upon the mount, where would be all their titles, their riches and grandeur, their coaches, their livery-men, and their plate? But ye know that these rules are different from this craft, whereby the parsons get their wealth, as heaven is different from hell. But as priestcraft is lucrative, it will be sure to find supporters, whilst the houses have got one HEAD left upon them.

In Acts v. we find that Peter and the rest of his praying, reading, and Scripture-expounding brethren, were brought before the Vice-Chancellor and the Heads of Houses for a hearing, and after a hearing of several hours they took counsel to slay them, v. 33. But there was one Dr. Gamaliel, the head of a certain house, who sided with them, and probably proved their doctrine from the articles of the Jewish church as by law established. I trow this same Dr. Gamaliel was tinctured with the doctrine they preached, as the principal of *Edmund-Hall*, who defended the faith of the six young men who were expelled the university of Oxford, for praying, &c. may be supposed secretly to have believed in the articles which he once subscribed, though he dare not now to avow his faith openly.

There is one thing in the account that is something remarkable, namely, the wise motion of Dr. Gamaliel overruled the bloody designs of the priests: but it was not so at the other university; for although the principal of *Edmund-Hall* defended and proved the methodistical doctrine from the articles of the church, and spoke highly of the piety and exemplariness of the lives of the young men, his his motion was over-ruled, and the six young men were ex-

pelled. As before observed, what is one methodist among a host of divines?

Another thing we may take notice of, namely, those ancient doctors had a law by which they could put people to death for praying, reading and expounding the Scriptures; but our universities have no such law, or it is no way doubtful but that the same zeal which will, under a protestant government, expel the students of the university for praying, &c. would for the same reasons burn offenders at the stake, were they favoured with a popish king. So that if the Heads of Houses were less bloody in their designs than their ancestors, it is not to be imputed to want of good will, but to the protestant restraints which they are under.

Remarkable was the procedure of the Jews against Stephen, related Acts vi. 9. "Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, &c. disputing with Stephen," &c. This same Stephen was a low churchman, a whig, and a puritan, and therefore was sure to be opposed in that blinded age. But who were they, my beloved, that here are said to have risen against Stephen?—Not bargemen, link-boys, lamplighters, and Irish chairmen; but gentlemen of the synagogue. "Certain of the synagogue," *i. e.* devout men of the established church, their Lauds, their Calamys, and their Sacheverels. But to what synagogue did they belong, think you? Why, they belonged to the "synagogue of the Libertines." Was ever one egg more like another than ancient things are to modern? If the gentlemen of the synagogue of the Libertines would have been quiet, Stephen might have gone on preaching and praying without opposition; but then it would have spoiled the priests' trade of getting wealth.

This leads me to enquire wherefore they rose up against him. Was he a drunkard, a murderer, or seditious person? or did he speak reproachfully of the miracles of Christ and of Moses? No, none of all these were alleged against him. But the grand cause of their umbrage was, "The word of God increased, and then numbers of his disciples increased;" whereby the people forsook their old libertine pastors, insomuch that the parish synagogues, in

many places, were almost wholly forsaken. Exactly alike again: Stephen you must know, was a great ringleader of that sect that turned the world up-side down; "he was full of faith and power, performing many notable miracles," to the grief of the gentlemen belonging to the Libertines; therefore they thought it best to dispatch him out of the way, for the safety of the church.

It would be endless, my beloved, to point out all the instances in which the Jewish and the ——— clergy agree; I shall therefore leave them to another occasion, and shall pass on to another very famous church in that part of the world, and after that I shall come near home, within our own ken. And,

3d. This famous church was that of Diana at Ephesus: and I wot in this church there was many a good living in the gift of the university; and I trow, that the Heads of Houses were careful that none should enjoy one of them unless he was well known to be a true son of the church, that is to say, a promoter of the sale of the shrines of Diana, and a worshipper of the image that fell down from Jupiter.

This Diana was, in her day, a lady remarkable for hunting of stags, and ever since, her clergy have been as remarkable for the hunting of (not stags, but) a good benefice. Now, my beloved, this same huntress was the personage worshipped by most people of Asia, and she had many, very many clergy, who adored her for the sake of gain; "for by this craft we have our wealth;" say they. A language not yet practically laid aside.

There was a famous university for the training up of young gentlemen in the holy craft of making shrines for the goddess; and a lucrative craft they found it, my beloved, for they had it in their power to sell a brazen shrine for a golden price; a thing which others besides them practise.

This university was at Ephesus, a very populous city, where water was cheap, but fire very dear; and here were many colleges and halls for training up of young men in the craft of *getting wealth*. Every hall had a head, and over all the Heads of Houses was a Vice-Chancellor, the Rev. Dr. Demetrius by name. As for praying, reading and expounding the Scriptures, they meddled not with them, but were in the highest degree intent upon getting wealth.

Well, they carried on this craft for many years, till at last there came some itinerant preachers to town, who made it their business to pray to God, to read and expound the Scriptures, and sing hymns in private houses, contrary to the sense of the university of Ephesus. This was no small mortification to the clergy, who very well knew, that if real religion, or praying, reading and expounding the Scriptures were tolerated, that it would put an end to their lucrative priestcraft, and their reverences would fall into disgrace. But the prevent such a catastrophe, the Rev. Dr. Demetrius, Vice-Chancellor, assembled the Heads of Houses to consult what was best to be done, and it was resolved, *nemine contradicente*, to cry out, *the church was in danger*, that under pretence of saving the church, they might save their own profits. Well, they cried out, that *the church was in danger*, that *the church was in danger*, till they had sufficiently inflamed the rabble, who have always proved the pillars of the church, when instigated by the priests; then they laid hold on the itinerants, and had them before the Heads of Houses, who gave them such treatment as praying people may expect to meet with from the clergy of the ——. It happened, however, as in a late case, that there was one man of integrity and honour amongst them, much like the Head of Edmund-Hall; only with this difference—the one was an attorney, and the other is a gentleman in holy orders. Well, this attorney, it seems, being town-clerk of Ephesus, thought that the clergy carried their authority a little beyond the rules of moderation and decency—a thing by no means uncommon for some gentlemen of the cap and gown. This town-clerk took up the cause of the itinerants; and in a spirited, sensible manner, defended their conduct and tenets; not from the thirty-nine articles, but from the articles of natural religion and morality, and spake very highly of their piety and good behaviour. I cannot but remark, that in this affair the town-clerk was more successful than the gentleman who pleaded the cause of the six methodists at Oxford: the former over-ruled the purposes of Diana's clergy, but the university clergy over-ruled the motion of the latter, according to our text; for though he defended their doctrine from the thirty-nine articles of the established church, and spoke very high ly of the piety and ex-

emplariness of their lives, "These six young men were expelled the university for praying, reading and expounding the Scriptures, and for singing hymns in a private house." For why? Why truly, my beloved, because praying, reading and expounding the Scriptures, is not the craft by which we get our wealth. For proof of this proposition, I refer you to stubborn facts, namely, that you shall seldom see a divine who makes a point of praying, reading and expounding the Scriptures, and of singing hymns, either in private or public houses, who keeps his equipage, and possesseth your fat livings. I wot, my beloved, that one drone eats more honey than four laborious bees: for proof of this, I refer you to the Rev. Dr. Pliny, an author of approved merit, and a great divine.

But I pass on to the fourth established church, the clergy of which, in all respects, possessed the spirit of university divines, or Heads of Houses; and I trow, it is a church of great pretensions, the clergy of which are as infallible as the most holy mother pope Joan, that lady who was Christ's vicar, Peter's successor, and carried the keys of heaven, hell, and purgatory in her pocket, when she was in her prime, and her moon shone at full. I guess by this time you know that I mean the good old one, catholic, Roman, infallible, pontifical, universal mother church, in the bosom of which our forefathers of the surcingle slept so snug, wrapt about with abbey lands, as with warm blankets. And if I may speak the sentiments of my sable brethren of the university, we wish for the sake of those lands, that we were all safe rolling in her warm bosom once more. But I will not keep you in suspense about it.

4th. Church, the conduct of whose clergy was so near a-kin to the conduct of the clergy of *****. In the days of Betsy, the vestal queen, the clergy suffered great discontent. For why? Because praying, reading, and Scripture expounding people were suffered to live, and were even tolerated in the university, which was a kind of counterbalance to the emolument their reverences had enjoyed in the days of Mary, of scarlet memory; for as soon as this orthodox lady had ascended the throne, matters took a very agreeable turn, and the right reverend bishops, Bonner and Gardiner, began to work for the good of the

church. Like true-bred doctors, they searched every corner of the land for matter to work upon; and who should they pitch upon, trow ye, but those ministers and others who prayed to God, read and expounded the Scriptures, and sung hymns? For those clergymen were much like unto others; they discouraged praying to any besides saints, canonized in their own church; and as for the Scriptures, they found it for their interest that the sense of them should be concealed. And, no doubt, other people of the same practices have reasons equally ponderous to assign for their conduct.

Who was Cranmer, my beloved? Why truly, though he was primate of all England, he took upon him to pray, read and expound the Scriptures, and as one such, according to the laws of Trent council, he was expelled the convocation, and burnt to death, as an enemy to the clergy. Latimer and Ridley, and Hooper and Taylor, and Bradford and Hunter, and Philpot, &c. &c. were all of them guilty of those heinous offences of praying, of reading, of expounding the Scriptures, and of singing of hymns. The same crimes with which the Oxford methodists were charged, for which they were expelled the university.

Thus, beloved, I have with much pleasure gone so far through with my first proposed plan; and from what I have advanced, we may raise the following remarks:

1. That the spirit of our doctors has been the same in all ages—a noble spirit of opposition to methodistical tenets. The magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, the scribes, the pharisees, the lawyers, the sadducees, and the doctors, and the shrine-makers, and the inquisitors, and the Roman bishops, and the Vice-Chancellors, and the Heads of Houses, are all in the same religion; namely, *to oppose praying, reading and expounding the Scriptures.*

2. That the state of religion in our land is likely to be soon upon a very respectable footing, seeing no more than six out of the vast number of students at Oxford, took upon them to pray to God, to read and expound the Scriptures; so that it is hoped, the many parishes in England will be likely to have parsons who will let their parishioners have their own way, and go quietly to hell without disturbing of them. Whereas, was not care taken to

suppress praying people in the university, we should have the nation swarming with them, much to the detriment of priestcraft.

3. It is observable, that we have found out more fully what four of the six gentlemen were, ere they set a foot in the university; one was a publican; another, a smith; a third, a barber; and a fourth, a teacher under W——y, as it is written by the Rev. Dr. Oxoniensis,—Gazetteer 12199, April 8, 1768; and I wot, my beloved, though my kindred are professors of such arts, they are held dangerous—therefore must not be tolerated by the clergy.

First and foremost, The clergy have suffered much discontent from the blacksmith; and whilst the bitterness of the loss of the abbey-lands, belcheth from our stomachs, we prunello gentlemen will never forgive the blacksmiths. Query, For why? Ans. Because he was a blacksmith's son, Lord Thomas Cromwel by name, who stripped the church; that is to say, the clergy, of those warm, those fat abbey lands. No more blacksmiths, I pray ye, now—we will have none of them. Therefore, Mr. V—e-C——r did well in expelling the man, because he had been a blacksmith.

2. Another of them had been a publican, *i. e.* a tax-gatherer; and I suppose Mr. V—e-C——r thought the difference betwixt *tax-gathering* and *tithe-gathering* being so very trifling, that after a young man had sufficiently learned at home to gather taxes, it was quite needless for him to come to the university to learn to *gather tithes.* I wot, my beloved, that the old grudge betwixt the pharisees and the publicans has not yet subsided; for, as the learned *Oxoniensis* observes, the V—e-C——r expelled a man the university for having been a publican.

3. And in the next place, another had been a *barber;* that is to say, a *shaver.* His reverence, Dr. Nowel, public orator of the university, hath given it as his charitable opinion, that this same barber can make a *very good wig,* from whence he lovingly concludes, that the said barber need not to starve; and from whence I conclude, that he would have been a very useful member of the university. *A good wig,* says Dr. Nowel, *i. e.* a decent artificial covering, for a bald pate; wherefore, it seems to have been very

bad policy to expel so useful a man, at the time when the Heads of Houses are so bald and weather-beaten themselves.

4. A fourth was a teacher in a school, under W——y: but who or what this same W——y is, whether a hill, an old abbey, a holy college, or an oak tree, the accurate *Oxoniensis* does not say. But this schoolmaster who taught under it, be it what it will, was justly expelled. For why? Because he departed so very far from the rule established among students. The common rule observed by the hopeful young gentlemen of the gown, is, before they have so much as learned the first lesson of themselves, they conclude that they are able to teach others: witness so many dull parsons. But this man, though he had been accustomed to teach others, meanly debased himself so far as to receive instructions from others; but such a mean opinion of one's self being no way likely to add weight to the importance of the parson, must not be tolerated.

HYMN

IN PRAISE OF THE UNIVERSITY.

I.

My thanks, and the nation's, to the doctors be given,
Those guardians of virtue, those porters of heaven,
For their timely wise care in suppressing the growth
Of praying, expounding, and hymn-singing youth.

II.

Should praying be suffer'd by our learned sages,
(What has not been known in Ox—d for ages,)
Instead of gay parsons, with cassock and band,
There would be none but puritans all o'er the land.

III.

Expounding the Scriptures! This still is more wicked,
Therefore from college be they instantly kicked;
For Scripture and priestcraft as distant do dwell
As some parsons from virtue, or heaven from hell.

IV.

We'll swear to the rubric, by this is our living;
(Some *hundreds a twelvemonth* is sure worth the having)
But we'll cast off our oaths as soon as they're swallow'd;
For *perjury* in gownsmen hath long since been hallow'd.

V.

Should we suffer the doctrines, to which we of yore
Gave assent and consent, and solemnly swore
To preach, and defend them against opposition,
We should throw ourselves wide from holy promotion.

VI.

These youth with their strictness detect our loose living,
Which, known to the world, would keep us from thriving:
Religion's a mirror that shews all profaneness—
Exclude it we therefore, to hide our own vainness.

VII.

If drinking or whoring, or *Scripture-reviling*,
Had been represented as their daily failing,
(As often in others it certainly might)
To wink at their foibles would then have been right.

VIII.

Thus acting with candour and tender forbearance,
Till we had reclaim'd them by patient endurance;*
But *praying* and *reading*, those horrible evils,
Oblige us *at once* to devote them to devils.

* The method pursued by the Heads of Houses, for reclaiming Dr. Welling from his infidelity and drunkenness; according to the Rev. Dr. Nowel, and the Goliah Slayer.

A FARTHER

DEFENCE OF PRIESTCRAFT:

BEING

A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF THE SHAVER'S SERMON ON THE EXPULSION OF SIX YOUNG GENTLEMEN FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, FOR PRAYING, READING AND EXPOUNDING THE SCRIPTURES.

OCCASIONED BY

A VINDICATION OF THAT PIOUS ACT,

By a Member of the University.

INSCRIBED TO

MR. V—E-C——R AND THE H—DS OF H——S,

BY THEIR HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE SHAVER.

A FARTHER

DEFENCE OF PRIESTCRAFT, &c.

HAVING again taken my pen in hand in the name of *high church*, I must inform my readers, that my late endeavours to serve the clergy have been very acceptable to the world, and have had no small honours conferred on them by men of reverence and learning; for I am very credibly informed, that my Sermon has had the honour of being grinned at by several ghostly guides of the D. D. rank, of more denominations than one; for it may be observed, that some doctors who have never a surplice to wear, have of late years been very strenuous for high church principles, and are every whit as zealous for uniformity as the clergy of ancient Babylon were, and as fond of imposing creeds and confessions as ever Sacheverel was. Well the D. D.'s of this high church party of all denominations have, it seems, found themselves aggrieved at the many-linked chain which I have given of the uniformity of religion among the clergy, from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the days of G—— III.; and as it can never be for the interest of priestcraft that the world should know that the clergy have their honours from men, and that the doctor's diploma does not come from heaven, they were a little chagrined at the liberties which the Shaver had taken with such a sacred and reverend order of priests; and I do not for my part blame them, for if you will gall a d— he will certainly wince.

However, I must inform my hearers, that in this day promotion of this sort among some folks cometh not from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south, and therefore it comes from the north, namely from Aberdeen. You'll observe they do not go there to receive it, but it is generously sent to them by persons whom they never saw nor spoke with in their days, and therefore does not a little add to the dignity of the receiver.

It is thought that the apostles would have been in much

higher esteem with our dignified clergymen than they are, if their *birth and education had given them the rank of gentlemen*, and if they had not been *brought up in the lowest of trades* before conversion; especially if they had not contented themselves with being called by the plain names of Paul, Peter, &c. but had annexed D. D. or prefixed Rt. Rev. to their proper names. And indeed it must be owned, that it would have been much more courtly and clerical in Paul to have begun his epistles thus: "His Grace the most reverend Father in God, Paul Lord Archbishop of all the Churches, *to the Saints and Faithful, &c. which are at*," *&c.* But he having nothing else to mind but true Christianity, which he knew could never be linked with worldly honours, contented himself with seeking the salvation of sinners, and left it to others to aggrandize themselves with sacerdotal titles.

Another part of the apostles' conduct, which it is thought has given great umbrage to some folks, is their not attempting to form any ecclesiastical establishment, which might become a state religion, so that national establishments might have been defended from the New Testament instead of human statutes and canons; but this was left by them unattempted, to the great mortification of the high church, and to the no small advantage of the low party, who are very apt to fly to the apostles' conduct for arguments to defend low church principles.

But not to dwell upon these things, my purpose is to point out the excellencies of a late little pamphlet, intitled, "A vindication of the proceedings against the six members of E-- Hall, Oxford. Inscribed to the Rev. Dr. Durell, Vice-Chancellor of the university, and to the worthy assessors at E-- Hall, by a gentleman, member of, and sincere well-wisher to, the university. May 14th, 1768, London." And I assure you that, from all the accounts we have had either from the Oxonians or Antioxonians, it appears to be a deed of charity to vindicate those gentlemen's proceedings, seeing common sense and religion will be sure to act the part of remonstrants here. And I think it is no small honour to that learned body to have such an able member to vindicate their *proceedings*, and so generous as to attempt it.

Zeal for the honour of the university warmed the breast

of the learned Vindicator in such a manner, that, being eager to serve the interests of his brethren, his errata well nigh equals the number of pages in his learned vindication, the former being *twelve* and the latter only *sixteen;* an instance rarely paralleled even by writers whose birth and education does not give them the *rank of gentlemen,* but who are *brought up to the lowest of trades,* as the rev. Vindicator observes. It was the opinion of Festus concerning Paul, that much learning had made him mad, and I fear if Festus had lived in our days he would have concluded, that *much learning makes some people d——s.* As you know a *learned d——* and a *pedant* are names signifying the same thing. It is something of a pity, however, that this learned body had not a little corrected the press; for this a critical age, as we Shavers observe.

But this judicious and learned Vindicator makes us ample amends for all these little inaccuracies by his sovereign contempt of the Scriptures; scorning to be beholden to them for a single quotation in defence of the proceedings against those six *delinquents* who were expelled from E— Hall by the V—C— and the Heads of Houses; but like a man of erudition has recourse to books of more approved authenticity; namely, "Corpus Statutorum Universitatis;" a book better by one half suited to his purpose, and fitter to promote the interests of the clergy.

From hence we may note, I. That this gentleman's opinion of the authority of Scripture in such cases is sufficiently mean, and therefore he thought them not worthy of his quoting; or that he was conscious, that whatever *Corpus Statutorum Universitatis* might do, that the Bible afforded nothing that would vindicate the conduct of the Rev. V— C— and the Heads of Houses in this particular, and therefore could not quote it: the latter of which is thought to be the case. But although Paul and Peter, &c. in the Bible, are not brought in as vouchers for the V— C—'s cause, Jack, in the Tale of a Tub, and old biting Juvenal, our old pagan brother, have the honour of being introduced.

But this is not to be wondered at when we consider that the Tale of a Tub was wrote by a rev. clergyman, and therefore was sure to have the preference to the Bible, which was written mostly, and the New Testament wholly, by laymen, to the no small grief of some fathers in black.

II. From hence we may see the disaffection of our learned Vindicator towards the compilers of the New Testament; and no wonder he is disaffected towards them, when we consider that those compilers did not study the good of the church, so as to found universities for the training of clergymen, nor provided any statutes for their safety when wiser men had established them; but shut up the canon of Scripture without making any provision for the honour and dignity of the clergy of our universities. Had the Scriptures been deemed a perfect rule of faith and practice, we should have had no creeds, no confessions of faith, no canons, no Corpus Statutorum Universitatis. How wonderful is the wisdom of the wise, who can so readily perfect what the apostles left lacking!

III. This gentleman, in his very friendly vindication, has acted with more moderate pretensions than many reverend writers have done. They would persuade us that they are descended in a direct line from the apostles; but the Vindicator does not seem to suspect that there is the least alliance betwixt them and his reverence; but joins himself with company by far more suitable for him, I mean the gentlemen lawyers who drew up the statutes of the university. And indeed we country folk wonder to see reverend, right reverend, and most reverend parsons, *whose birth and education give them the rank of gentlemen*, pretending to be descended from laymen and fishermen. But wonders never cease.

This is a long introduction, and shall for the present serve. Proceed we therefore to the vindication itself, page 1. "To profess openly our religious principles, and to worship God in such manner as seems to us most acceptable to him, are justly esteemed a noble branch of the liberties of this country. We claim it as our birth-right," &c. This is not to be understood of laymen, but only of the clergy; for it is well known that the laity are obliged to submit to the judgment of the clergy because of their superiority. If a layman or any other, think it his duty to worship God in a manner different from the prescription of the priests, he cannot do it under pain of excommunication. Therefore this glorious privilege of thinking for ourselves is peculiar to the clergy, else it is a non-entity. Witness the Test Act, the disgrace of a protestant country.

Page 2. "The present subject will rest upon the right of societies to fix laws for regulation of their own members, and demand their obedience to those laws." This is plausible reasoning; but the Vindicator, being in such a hurry to justify the university, forgot how much like a drum his argument is for emptiness; for you know if a society is merely a *civil* society, its laws are to be made and executed in a dependance upon the laws of the state, and in a subserviency to the good of the commonwealth. But if a society professeth itself *Christian*, then can it make no laws without the authority of the great head of the Christian church. Therefore for the honour of the university, and the better defence of Mr. V— C—, it were to be wished that that learned body would tell us whether they consider themselves as only a civil society, or a Christian community; and if they consider themselves as the latter, it would be very seasonable to inform us what hand Jesus Christ had in giving *Corpus Statutorum Universitatis;* whether, like John's baptism, it be from heaven, or, like the doctrine of the pharisees, only from men. But I fear, my friends, we are most fond of our own *home-made* laws, as being most adapted to the purposes of priestcraft.

Page 3. "This is the only criterion by which we can rightly judge of the merits of the case before us. By those statutes which they had sworn to observe they must stand or fall." Well, sirs, what think you? Is not this a home stroke upon the authority of the Scriptures? In former times before religion became a political engine, it was used to be said: "To the law and to the testimony, for whosoever walketh not according to this rule it is because there is no light in them:" but now things are much altered from what they were then, and it seems to be right priestly language to say, "To Corpus Statutorum Universitatis, for whosoever walketh not according to this rule, exclusive of all others, shall be expelled the university." This will account for our parish priests' neglect of the Bible in their preaching, to the shutting of the door of knowledge upon the common people; having at the fountain of learning been taught other rules, yea even bound by solemn oath (as the learned Vindicator says, p. 2.) to observe another rule of doctrine and manners.

The only criterion. There's for you. The New Testa-

ment is no criterion with Mr. Vindicator, it seems; but still I fear the laity will think, that obedience to the New Testament is well nigh as laudable as obedience to Corpus Statutorum; for they cannot be brought to give up the Bible with such a priestly willingness as some folks can.

Ibid. "All reasonings of the innocence of the things in themselves which are alleged against the members lately expelled from E— Hall, have nothing to do with the subject, and only serve to heat the minds of a party." Such an assertion as this, has need of the authority of an A. M. or even D. D. before it ventures abroad, because *common sense* will be sure to find out its rottenness. It is no matter, you see, whether the things laid to the charge of the young men were innocent in themselves or not, seeing they were against the statutes. The bare supposition of innocence in case of a breach of the statutes, insinuates a possibility of their being in some cases different from the rule of right, which, if granted, divests Corpus Statutorum of all its authority to decide in any matter. Therefore the venerable Vindicator rather overshot himself in this; but we must impute that to the embarassments he was under, as you know it is no easy matter to vindicate every act of some gentlemen, and of course some grains of allowance must be made. After all, was I to free a prisoner going to the pillory or to T——n, I should think it a query of some moment, whether he was guilty of the crimes laid to his charge, and whether these crimes in the nature of things actually deserved such a punishment.

Ibid. "It was necessary to premise, that the whole proceeding was in consequence of a regular information to the Vice-Chancellor," &c. A thing very common and easy to be obtained against people who make conscience of praying to God in a private house; for your people who do not love praying themselves, cannot endure those who do. Many instances of this might be produced from the cases of Daniel, Jesus, and his apostles, all as regular as this can be; therefore, if we have nothing better than a regular information to vindicate these proceedings, I fear much that our cause will fall into the puddle.

Well, now we come to the charge against them, according to our reverend Vindicator. And considering his near affinity with, and fervent affection for, the Vice-Chancellor,

and the assessors of E—— Hall, we cannot suppose that he has unjustly concealed any part of the guilt of the parties expelled.

Page 4. "First, the accused members had held or frequented illicit conventicles; some not in orders had preached, expounded, and prayed extempore: that the offices of religion were performed by people of the meanest ranks and abilities: that they met at a conventicle held in a private house within the university, where a stay-maker and a woman officiated."

This word *conventicle* was a great word about a century ago, when the clergy were blessed with the *tractable* race of Stuarts. Then those people, who would pray extempore, were, like Issachar, glad to stoop down between two burdens; one imposed by the king, and another by the clergy; and the dignitaries of the church in those days like so many Balaams mounted upon the poor asses, and belaboured them, as a late ingenious writer, says, with the rod of excommunication.* But since the death of that indefatigable defender of the church, the great Sacheverel, the word conventicle has lain dormant; but now it is awaked in the university, where all names of pious slander have their origin to support the old interest: though it is feared that it will not take with the populace now, as it used to do in former days, the people for these last glorious reigns of liberty having had time to clear their eyes from the dust thrown into them by former high church leaders. To the days of popery, or to the days of mongrel religion, are our universities indebted for most of their statutes, which are the *only* rules for the students' conduct. No wonder therefore, that conventicles stand in them so gracefully; though it would appear not a little strange to hear of conventicles in a land *strictly* protestant; for in such lands every loyal subject has a right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without being exposed to *expulsions*, *fines*, or *imprisonment*; or, on account of his religion, being held incapable of *places* of *honour*, *profit*, and *trust*, under the government. But it is undoubtedly otherwise in nations where the clergy protest against the power of the pope, in order to arrogate that to themselves which they have taken from him. The first principle upon which the Reformation

* See a late publication, intitled "Sermons to Asses."

was founded, was that every man, professing to believe in the Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice, has a right to judge for himself in religious matters, without exposing himself to any punishment whatever on that account. Whether then our Vindicator and his friends at Oxford can be deemed true protestants in heart, seeing they deny that liberty to the king's subjects, I leave to be determined by somebody else; and, as a benevolent layman, would advise the clergy, for the sake of their own reputation, to disuse the word conventicle till times wheel about to a more favourable point; for I should be sorry to see contempt poured upon the princes of our Israel.

I shall not dispute the point with the reverend Vindicator, what is deemed by *Corpus Statutorum*, &c. to be an illicit conventicle; this I shall leave to an abler hand; but would rather content myself with what common sense and protestant principles say of the case; and these deem it little less than blasphemy, to brand the worship of God, when, offered in sincerity, with such names of infamy, even if the worshippers should in some things be mistaken, notwithstanding there may be a sanction for such infamous proceedings found in some old statutes unrepealed.

Some of the greatest fathers in the church were found to frequent conventicles, and to worship God in private houses, and that, without their place of meeting being certified to the bishop of the diocese. I would quote an instance or two, if I thought that so much Scripture would not be offensive to the Vindicator. The first is in Acts ii. 49. where we find the first Christians "brake bread from house to house." That is, administered the sacrament (so called) in private houses; and if you consider the time when this was done, you will find those houses could not all be licensed.

A second instance we have in Acts xii. 12. where many were gathered together, praying in a private house, namely in the house of Mark's mother. It may be urged, indeed, that they were obliged to meet in private houses for worship in those days, because the Jewish clergy kept all the public houses or synagogues for their own use: but this is the very case at this day, clergymen who are bound on oath to preach and pray by book, keep all the public houses or churches for their own use; therefore, those who are inclined to preach and pray *extempore*, are obliged to do it in

private houses or conventicles; and it is rather hard to hinder them so to do.

Upon the whole, it is pretty evident that there is a wde difference betwixt the sentiments of the apostles, and those of Mr. V— C——r, and brethren; for the former frequented and preached in conventicles, and the latter expelled from the university for so doing. Yea, we find in the last case, that the Almighty did not disdain to hear their prayers, even though they were offered in a conventicle. But if the Most High were governed by such motives as frequently influence some men, conventicle prayers had certainly vanished into air, and would never have reached the gracious throne. But he is God, and not a clergyman.

There is a second particular in the first charge, as I have it from the learned Vindicator, and that is; "some not in orders had preached, expounded, and prayed extempore." This, I verily believe, so far as relates to the point of *orders;* for there is but too much reason to fear, that the far greater part who do pretend to preach or expound the Scriptures, do it without orders. But then it ought to be observed, that there are orders from two different quarters. 1. There are orders from the court of heaven, which every gentleman professes to my lord bishop to be invested with ere he can obtain ordination. 2. His lordship's orders, which according to the original design of the institution, was to follow upon, and not precede the former. It is not difficult to prove that many take upon them to preach without receiving orders from heaven, as appears from their backwardness to perform pastoral duties, feeding at the altar, but leaving it to others to do the office of a priest. Such gentlemen may sustain very venerable characters in life, but how they will manage it in death I pretend not to say: some people fear they may hear the report which Abraham made to the libertine in the Gospel, which if they do, it will make both their ears to tingle. Some of these, indeed, have not the happiness of obtaining a benefice that will enable them to preach by proxy, and very many are obliged to put up with a curacy, and all their days continue underlings. The many parishes, the inhabitants of which are uninstructed even in the first principles of Christianity, prove it to demonstration, that their parsons received not their orders

from heaven; therefore so far I agree with the learned Vindicator. Farther, there be many who cannot persuade themselves that my lord bishop has the authority he pretends to, supposing that the offices of an apostle and a lord b——p differ in reality, as much from one another as the practice of the latter differeth from that of the former; and therefore they do not choose to submit to episcopal ordination, but preach without being in orders, as the Vindicator observes. But what could this be to the young men who were expelled, provided none of them preached without orders? and *their* doing so is not expressed in the charge, though I think the Vindicator might intend it to be understood of them; but this I cannot suspect from the charge itself as exhibited in the vindication, but from his after-reasoning upon it. However, it is not easy to account for the conduct of some people, especially when they have a bad cause to defend. And I, for my part, would never have dared to take a clergyman by the skirt, if I had not known the prunella to be rotten. But for the honour of the university it is to be wished, that the Vindicator had been a little more cautious, page 8, and not betrayed such weakness as is enough to make even a *barber* to blush.

Well, we shall suppose that *some* of them, as the *Vindicator* says, or *one* of them, as *Dr. Oxoniensis* says, had preached without orders; must it from thence follow, that all must be expelled, seeing the very charge itself tacitly acknowledgeth that they were not all guilty?

But supposing they had all preached in this conventicle —what then? "Why, they were then guilty of a flagrant breach of the twenty-third article of the church, in preaching without being in orders."—Page 8. The article runs thus: "It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of *public preaching*, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same." This late convert to the church designs this article to prove that the six young men had broken their subscription engagements. But alas! for want of a tolerable acquaintance with the articles, he has brought it in only to shew the wretched shifts that people are obliged to fly to, to support arbitrary and oppressive proceedings. Nothing is said in the twenty-third article, but about *public preaching and ministering the sacraments in the congre-*

gation. Now, if these young men actually did so, then were they guilty of a flagrant breach of the article; but if they did not so, how shall we account for this assertion, otherwise than by imputing it to inattention, and over-heated zeal for high church, which must at all events be supported, though it should be even at the expense of truth and common honesty? But the charge itself leaves us to suppose, that this preaching and praying extempore was not performed without orders in public houses or churches, but in a conventicle or private house, namely, a *staymaker's*, therefore cannot be called *public preaching in the congregation*, and consequently no breach of the twenty-third article. This might have passed without notice probably, if the words *public preaching* had not been printed in italics to distinguish them from the rest: what thoughtlessness was here, seeing those very words clear the six young men from the charge of breaking the twenty-third article! Our reverend Vindicator may assure himself, that the articles of the church will not be concerned in such a dirty affair; for they nowhere forbid people to meet together, and converse about the things of religion, or to exhort one another while it is called to-day, or to pray with, and for one another, &c.

But they "prayed extempore in this assembly, in breach of the second article in the thirty-sixth canon, which declares, that the book of Common Prayer, and of ordering of bishops, priests, and deacons, containeth in it nothing contrary to the word of God, and *that it may lawfully be so used;* and that I myself will use the form in the said book prescribed, in public prayer, and administration of the sacraments, and *none other.*"

The learned Vindicator would have us to understand, that by this canon all extempore prayer is utterly prohibited; and that these six young men, having subscribed this article, could not with a good conscience pray extempore, nor by any form whatsoever besides the book of Common Prayer. Therefore exclaims, page 9, "How men, who would seemingly affect to be thought conscientious, can, after such subscription, deviate so widely, seems amazing; but to see such men, who have so deviated, held up to the public as martyrs and sufferers in the cause of religion, must strike all honest and sensible men, not only with

astonishment, but with horror." Here is a large fabric indeed. But suffer me a little to feel the pillars upon which it stands; however, I should do it gently, for if I handle them roughly, it will tumble down as the horns of Dagon did, not much to the honour of the Vindicator, a gentleman whom I would not willingly offend.

But if we must take the canon in his sense of it;—and who so likely to know its true meaning as he?—it would subject us to some little inconvenience. For instance, he judiciously observes, "Every student at matriculation subscribes the three articles in the thirty-sixth canon, and takes the oath for observing the statutes of the university." The second of which articles binds a man to use *no other* form of prayer but that in the book of Common Prayer. Let it be here observed, that all Companions to the Altar, all the Week's Preparations, Whole Duties of Man, and all occasional prayers for fast days, days of thanksgiving, &c. are expressly against the second article of the canon; and therefore every officiating clergyman in the kingdom breaks the canon law, because they use other forms besides the Common Prayer. Well, then, the six young gentlemen need not become melancholy for want of company. However, I can tell you, that the booksellers find their account in the esteemed orthodoxy of many other forms of prayers besides the Common Prayer, and therefore we never shall get them to subscribe to this gentleman's opinion, that none other are to be used.

Every one takes the oath for the observing the statutes of the university; the statutes of the university enjoin the strictest observance of the canons; the canons prohibit all prayer beside the use of the book of Common Prayer; the clergy do at certain times make use of prayers at pence a piece not to be found in the book of Common Prayer; *ergo*, the clergy break their matriculation oath in so doing, though they do it by royal authority. Ah! what has our Vindicator been doing, but fulfilling that saying of a great layman, "a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother". For shame, sirs! that this learned gentleman should, in his zeal for the university, a dvance aproposition attended with consequences so unfavourable to the established church and her sons. Let me advise him, before he writes another vindication, to spend a considerable time in acquainting

himself with the doctrine of consequences, that he may not open one door of reproach whilst he attempts to shut another; for nobody will believe that the article referred to is to be understood in a sense which lays a clergyman under a necessity either of perjuring himself or disobeying superior powers; which must be the case, if it not only prohibits extempore prayer, but every other form of prayer besides the book of Common Prayer, seeing certain occasions call for other forms.

Another inconvenience would attend this sense of the article; and that is, a person thus subscribing, might find himself in such circumstances, in which no other part of the book of Common Prayer might be exactly suited to his case; wherefore in this situation he must either use some other prayer, or not pray at all; to suppose the latter is inconsistent with the remotest idea of the protestant faith, and therefore the former must be admitted. A man may be in a situation where he could not have time to seek out a prayer in the legal form, nor spare his hands to hold a book: supposing for instance, he was in danger of drowning, would it be deemed a breach of the canon, if without book he should cry, "Save, Lord, I perish?" Or, supposing a man should lose his eyes, or be cast where he could not obtain a prayer-book, must he be deemed a transgressor, if in such case he should even pray extempore? It is not my business to inquire at present from whence our prayer-makers derived their authority; but would just observe, that the c——y are so exceedingly set against extempore prayer, is not to be wondered at, seeing so few of them are capable of exercising themselves therein; and they know that if others were allowed, it must be greatly to their disgrace, as the professed *ambassadors* of Christ, and *plenipotentiaries* of Heaven.

But will the right learned author of the vindication give a layman liberty a little to wipe off the dirt, which, in his hurry of thought, he hath inadvertently cast upon article second, canon thirty-six, which, so far as concerns the matter in debate, I shall cite in his own words? "I myself will use the form in the said book prescribed, in *public prayer* and *administration of the sacrament*, and *none other*."

Let me ask this friendly gentleman, what he really

thinks is intended by public prayer in this article? Whether he really thinks, that conventicle prayer in private houses is intended? and if conventicle prayer in private houses is not there intended, how is it, in the name of honesty and common sense, that these six young gentlemen are guilty of a breach of that article, seeing that they are charged with no prayer, but that performed in a conventicle, in a private house, notwithstanding their very enemies were their accusers and judges? Does not the Vindicator in this display his clerical powers, and discover what he would do, if he could? This is something like swallowing a camel, a thing which some people can do much easier than others can swallow a gnat.

It would be ridiculous to suppose a member of the famous university of Oxford *ignorant* that *public prayer* always intends that which is made in the church assemblies, and not that prayer which is offered up to God in a private meeting of Christian friends; or, how should the administration of the sacraments be joined with it in the article? The subscribing of this article, therefore, is neither more nor less than an engagement to abide by the Common Prayer book in every part of public worship where prayer is instituted; but with respect to personal, family, or fellowship worship, the subscriber is left at liberty by the article, though not by the clergy. I think therefore the clergy are more against extempore prayer than the articles and canons, for a very good reason before given, namely, want of capacity for it in themselves.

I am confronted at the bottom of page 9, with an odd sort of a speech, considering by whom it was made. "But to see men, who have so deviated, held up to the public, as martyrs and sufferers in the cause of religion, and that too by a man of Mr. Whitefield's public character, &c." A character, however, which our learned and very reverend Vindicator endeavours to daub a little with infamy; infamy! such as is thought "must strike every honest and temperate man with astonishment and horror."—Page 10, Vind. I cannot, however, but approve of the Vindicator's prudence in choosing to have a fling at this gentleman's character, rather than to attempt to answer his letter to Dr. Durell, which he could not but see to be far beyond his match.

"Held forth as Martyrs."—I confess I love to meet with a blunder now and then, when I read the works of learned men, because it helps to keep me, who am but a Shaver, in countenance, when I meet with blunders in my own; but I hate to be troubled with so many as I meet with in this little performance: for this reason, I humbly beg that Mr. V— C—— will not suffer any more of his Vindicators to print their performances till he himself has thoroughly perused them; as there is no trusting every gownsman in print, and we readers cannot have while to set every thing straight, which we meet with crooked, in the course of our reading.

"Martyrs," *i. e.* murdered or put to death for the sake of truth. Well done, parson! Pray, when or where did Mr. Whitefield hold them forth as murdered or put to death? He knows very well, that however some gownsmen might delight in such work, that for the present it is out of their power, therefore he has not once hinted it.

Martyrs and *sufferers* for the cause of religion. You will observe, that first they were *martyred* and then they *suffered.* Some people would have supposed, that martyrdom was the *finis* of their sufferings, as in former cases, and not to precede their other sufferings.

Sufferers for the cause of truth they have been represented, and that justly, and the contrary does not appear as yet from this vindication. For instance, they suffered for using extempore prayer, as the Vindicator owns; extempore prayer was used by Christ and his apostles; and it is thought that they would have been expelled too, had they lived in this formal age.

A third thing in the first charge, page 4. seems not altogether unworthy of our notice; namely, "That the offices of religion were performed by people of the meanest ranks and abilities." That this is true, must be granted by all who have any acquaintance with the roots from whence many of the clerical slips are grown. Many a reverend parson in England is descended of parents, who could not have afforded him an education to fit him for a country shopman, who but for *free schools, &c.* must even have been brought up to some low mechanical business, which some of their present reverences have actually been employed in, and after such employment have taken their de-

grees in the university of Oxford. Instances of which I can give, if necessary. But then it must be owned, that they are such, who, I believe, never took upon them to pray extempore, either in public or private houses, the former of which are very familiar to some of them.

Touching the abilities of many clergymen, I can only say, that for the honour of the clergy it were to be wished, that by their regard to the natural abilities of the candidate for orders, they would endeavour to reverse that old proverbial saying, used in the country, viz. "That if a lad is ever such a dunce, if he has good friends, he will do very well for a parson." And really it seems as if we had a recent proof of this in the vindication before us. And now I am upon this subject, I will even tell you, that the reason assigned by many a sensible old woman in the country, why so many clergymen do not attempt to preach frequently to their flocks, is the very thing alleged in the charge, "the meanness of their abilities." And if the gentlemen concerned have got ever a better reason to assign, I advise them to do it; otherwise, the old women will go on with their story. For my own part, when I have gone with the rest of my neighbours for *pleasure* or for *form's sake* to church on a Sunday, I have not a little admired the courage of the parson, who could pretend to preach under the disadvantage of such low abilities. I instance these things to confirm the truth of the charge.

It cannot be thought that our learned Vindicator means that any of those six young gentlemen performed the offices of religion in that conventicle; for this gentleman himself tells us that it was a *staymaker* and a *woman* who officiated there (page 4): and in page 10 he represents them as "learners of this staymaker and old woman." Therefore, what had they to do with this? or, with what propriety could they be expelled on account of the old woman's preaching?

Now if the Vindicator means that the staymaker is a person of the lowest rank, I can tell him he had best eat his words before they come to the ears of the ladies, on whose good graces his preferment greatly depends; and they will certainly conclude with me, that a staymaker is at least upon a level with a gown and cassock-maker, therefore will consider this as an insult offered to their ladyships.

Or, if his reverence means that this preaching woman is of the meanest rank, I must tell him, that he misseth his mark; for it is said, there are a set of ladies in Oxford, with whom many students are initmately acquainted, of a rank much inferior to hers, and of an employment very different from preaching.

Page 10.—"I shall not condescend to say much about what these worthy babes of grace might learn from the pious and instructive expositions of a staymaker and an old woman." If his reverence refer to the arts and sciences, it is thought they could learn but little; but if he means true religion, it is deemed not impossible for them to learn more of some old women than they could have learned of all the doctors of the u——y; for it is pretty evident, that their studying divinity under the direction of an old woman, was owing to those whose place it was to have instructed them therein, being unacquainted with the subject as much as the old woman was unacquainted with the original languages. However, I must remind his reverence that the eloquent Apollos condescended to be taught the law of the Lord more perfectly, even by an old woman, called Priscilla.

"I shall not say much about what these babes of grace might learn," &c.—This is the greatest, if not the only instance of prudence which I have met with in this little vindication; for which every person of common sense must give him due honour; for, as a royal philosopher once said, "Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise;" and it is well known that the most laudable way of concealing our ignorance of a subject is to say nothing about it. And if this "sincere well-wisher to the university" had invariably followed this rule, he would have saved me the trouble of observing, that, in the little which he hath condescended to say upon this subject, he hath said considerably more than is true, as I shall shew by and by; meanwhile observe,

"I shall not *condescend*."—There is buckram for you! True priestly dignity, as different from the *lowly* conduct and commands of the *condescending* Jesus, as heaven is from hell. However, in this truly clerical greatness, the venerable Vindicator only imitates his betters, who are so swelled with worldly greatness, that they will not *condescend* to converse familiarly with the poor of the flock

about death, judgment, and eternity; notwithstanding, for the sake of the living, they are become accountable for the very souls they disdain to converse with, because their birth and fortune does not entitle them to the rank of gentlemen. The reason why the apostles did not think themselves above the meanest of the people, I suppose might be, because their own "birth and education did not give them the rank of gentlemen"—a qualification for the university which our six young men are likewise said to be destitute of. When Christ was upon earth with his people, he did not see it proper to employ gentlemen in his service, but chose his ministers out of the *lowest ranks of the people*, to perform all the offices of religion, a thing complained of in the first charge against the delinquents: but now the university having taken the government of the church into their own hands, they govern it by laws which he never had any hand in making, and impose gentlemen upon him whether he will or not. And, indeed, though this does not at all appear requisite to the prosperity of the Gospel, yet it is highly necessary to the dignity of the clergy, a thing which must have the preference with some of us.

The same page has, "We all know that it is not only at a saddler's at Oxford, but among all denominations of enthusiasm, that old women expound, preach, and administer the other offices of the church."

What disadvantages, alas! we illiterate people labour under in comparison of the academics; for I never till now heard of more denominations of enthusiasm than one, and that one has long been in no small reputation with more sorts of people than some folks are aware of. I have, indeed, without any advantages out of the reach of a layman, heard of a plurality of enthusiasts; but heretofore have understood enthusiasm as the one denomination of enthusiasm; but I rather think, that our author meant denominations of enthusiasts, only mistook the word for want of referring to Bailey's dictionary. I should like to know in his next *vindication* how many denominations of enthusiasm, or enthusiasts there are, and what their names, that I may pay my respects to the *old ladies*, their *parsons*. It can be no difficulty for him to inform me, for he says, that "All the clergy know this, that old women do preach among them, and administer the other offices of the church."

Should he mean all *his readers*, he is certainly beyond the line of truth, for I am one who do not know them, and I think I can point out a very reputable body of enthusiasts, among whom old women, properly so called, are not suffered to preach; but all the offices of the c—— are performed by old women of the masculine gender. My friend the Vindicator has an unhappy way of speaking more than he means, and writing more than he intends to be understood. He says, that we all know that "old women do not only expound, and pray, and preach, but administer the other offices of the church." And I observe, that as we all know this so well, a few instances of it may be required to support the veracity of the vindication, which appears to be in a tottering condition. O rare Vindicator! what will you not say to serve a friend?

Being led to discuss this illustrious subject by the learned Vindicator, who is so unmannerly towards our female preachers, I shall beg leave to relate a story, the truth of which his reverence may depend upon. I was once in company with a learned clergyman at Ben. Mason's, a neighbouring farmer, who treated the parson and I with a cup of his harvest beer, when who should come in, think you, but one of these preaching old women, who soon began to scrape acquaintance with her brother in black, which utterly spoiled our conversation, for the parson and I were conversing very freely about the news, &c. but nothing would serve this female preacher but religion must be introduced. The parson did what he could, indeed, to divert the conversation into a more agreeable channel; but the old woman would have her own way; a thing not uncommon with others of that sex; in consequence of which, a dispute arose between the he and she preachers, the issue of which proved to all present, that the old woman was by a great deal the better divine. Now, to dismiss this subject, let me advise my good friend the clergyman, ere he attempts to draw out his pen against a woman a second time, though the conduct of his superiors should even stand in great need of a vindication, to read with attention a learned dissertation upon old women, wrote by Thomas Gordon, Esq. of savoury memory with the clergy; and I dare assure him, that thereby he will learn more than he seems to have done by all the lectures he has at-

tended at the university, and obtain a more respectable knowledge of that maternal race of fair preachers.

So much for the first charge against the six methodists. Let us now attend to the second charge.

II. "Some of them had been bred up to, and had exercised the lowest of trades, were wholly illiterate, and incapable of performing the statutable exercise of the university, and much more incapable of being qualified for orders." —Page 5, Vindication. That these are not very villanous, we have the Vindicator's own judgment to testify, p. 11. "Although these charges of themselves might not be thought sufficient grounds for expulsion, there was a very high impropriety, it must be allowed in their first admission." And some people will think that this charge does not need such a pen as mine to turn it away, seeing it will fall to pieces of itself, even if left alone. It pains me to see the author, composer, and exhibiter of this charge, to have acted with so little caution, as to have given the lie to the great Dr. Oxoniensis, a gentleman upon whom I have conferred some honours already, and to whom I have promised more, as I shall shew by and by; but now I shall attend to the charge itself.

"*Some* of them had been bred to, and exercised the lowest trades;" *some* of them, not *all* of them. And yet *all* of them were expelled, because "*some* of them had been bred to, and exercised the lowest of trades;" and this is thought to be agreeable to the statute in such case provided. Here is justice heaped and running over! —The numerous readers of my excellent sermon, intitled, "Priestcraft defended," will remember the weighty reasons I assigned against the *blacksmiths*, the *publican*, and the *teather under W——y*, and why they ought to have been expelled the university; and have only to observe now, that the Vindicator does not do cleverly in calling those the *lowest* of *trades*, seeing there be, and have been, trades as low as these. For instance, there is,

1. The trade of *tent-making*, to which the apostle Paul had been bred, and which he had exercised before he went to the university at Jerusalem; and although the Jewish clergy were very sensible of their superiority over others, the Vice-Chancellor of that university, and the assessors of that hall to which Paul belonged, and Dr. Gamaliel the

learned president, never attempted to expel him on account of his having been a tent-maker, notwithstanding some of them afterwards became his persecutors, not for *tent-making* indeed, but for preaching the Gospel. In this, therefore, the Jewish clergy were rather more moderate than the O——d priests.

Moreover, after this same Paul had become an apostle, he followed his trade of tent-making, and wrought with his own hands, rather than be burdensome to the poor believers for so much as a *tithe-pig*. "He worked with his own hands." He was not like many who pretend to be a-kin to him, who eat the fat and drink the sweet, at the great expense of the people, and in return hardly preach once in twelve months: those are drones; but Paul was an industrious workman, both at his trade, and also in the word and doctrine; for he chose to spend and be spent in the service of the Gospel: but some of his pretended kinsmen, though they have all the emoluments of the altar, are so much afraid of being spent in its service, that they content themselves with preaching by *proxy*, which, you know, is very gentleman-like.—But I have said, that Paul was no *gentleman;* and I add now, that he was not only a tradesman, but a *journeyman*. Not a *journeyman parson*, but a *journeyman tent-maker;* for he did work with his own hands, which master tradesmen seldom care to do, otherwise we should have fewer bankrupts than we have. But our great gownsmen neither *work* nor *preach*, and yet they are apostolic, and yet they are divinely commissioned, and yet they are descended of the apostles, and yet there is not the least likeness between the apostles and their reverences, and yet they have a divine right to all the profits of the church.

2. There were fishermen; I do not say fishmongers, the lords of the finny tribes, for that is a high trade; but fisherman, which to this day continues one of the lowest of trades; and yet out of this class of people, it pleased the Redeemer to choose most of his apostles; and although we read of gentlemen commoners at the universities, yet we do not read of any gentlemen fishermen at Yarmouth, &c. The great Master of the apostles having no kingdom in this world, and never designing his religion to become political, had no need of employing gentlemen to dignify

his Gospel, therefore chose fishermen, as most suitable to the purposes he had in view. Neither their birth, education, nor dress gave them the rank of gentlemen: all the ranks of the clergy in those days distinguished themselves from the laity by the peculiarity of their dress; but it appears not that the dress of the apostles differed at all from that of the meanest of the people: and yet they prayed, and yet they preached the Gospel, to the great confusion of the holy trade of priestcraft. But times are altered since then; and whatever Jesus Christ might have done in his day, the Vindicator observes, that our modern clergy will not suffer people of the meanest ranks, who have been bred to the lowest trades, to become students at the university; for *six* young men were expelled, because *some* of them had exercised the meanest trades. In this, therefore, there is a manifest discord betwixt the apostles and their reverences. However, this *lad*, the Vindicator, was imprudent in alleging that their trades were the lowest, seeing there have been, and still are, trades lower than theirs. But boyish youth, pride of learning, and hope of preferment, will make a wiser than he to speak at random.

"They were wholly illiterate, and incapable of performing the statutable exercise of the university, and much more incapable of being qualified for orders," says Mr. Vindicator.

Wholly illiterate, i. e. could neither read nor write; for a person cannot be deemed wholly illiterate, if he has a competent degree of knowledge of his mother tongue; and this is a language which the learned Vindicator does not seem perfectly to understand himself. If the maxim laid down by some persons of eminence is to be regarded, "true learning does not consist in the knowledge of the languages, so much as in the knowledge of mankind," we shall find many a dunce who understands Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, who never was capable of entering into the spirit of the writers he has read, and many a learned man who never knew any language besides his mother tongue. However, our little Vindicator has the effrontery to give the lie to the great Oxoniensis, for which it is well if he himself is not in danger of expulsion.

This great man, of whose veracity it is dangerous to doubt within the precinct of the university, very gravely

tells us in the Gazetteer, and New Daily Advertiser, April 8, that they *were very illiterate*. But they were *wholly so*, says the Vindicator, That they were not *wholly* so, the Rev. Oxoniensis proves from his declaring that they were a *little* acquainted with the Greek. For my part, I agree with his reverence, not loving to quarrel with great men, and shall leave the Vindicator to take what follows, which may perhaps teach him not to contradict his betters for the future. However, was it even so as the boy would have it, that they were wholly illiterate, it is apparent from their conduct that they desired to learn. Now where in the name of wonder should a thirsty man go but to the fountain? or, where should men go who are imperfect in the languages to attain the complete knowledge of them, but to the fountain of learning, the university? I can tell our Vindicator that it is not every lad that has the advantage of being trained up in a dissenting academy, as he had, before he went to the university, notwithstanding he can *talk now so liberally of Conventicles. Turn-coats are always most violent.*

It is needless for me to attempt a farther refutation of this second charge, seeing the Vindicator himself does not consider these things included in it as sufficient grounds for expulsion. I shall therefore dismiss this head, after I have just observed, that the Heads of Houses are very much obliged to this *boy* for the friendly admonition he bestows on them. Page 12. "We may hope this instance of an admission of persons, wholly illiterate, will be a warning to the Heads of Houses," &c. I confess, it does not reflect much honour upon the Heads of Houses to stand in need of reproof from a pert boy, whose beard has not strength to resist the shaver's razor. It is hoped, therefore, they will not submit to the instruction of the gentleman commoner, aged nineteen. And I pass on to the

III. Charge against the six young men expelled. I confess it is a heavy charge, which, if true, they ought to be expelled from all Christian society; for it is no less than "that they held the doctrines of *Methodism*, viz. That faith without works is sufficient to salvation:—that there is no necessity of good works:—that the immediate influence of the Spirit is to be waited for:—that once a child of God, and always a child of God. These, I presume, make

no part of the doctrines of the church of England." It is something unlucky for our Vindicator, that the doctrine of the Methodists is so well known, that the greatest part of his few readers will consider this as a fib; but who would not fib for the good of the cause? And who, that has a penny to catch, would not be upon the side of the strongest party, and bait piety under the name of frenzy, like the hungry authors of many a performance? But let us a little inquire into the truth of this charge, as made by the Vindicator.

"They held the doctrines of *pure* Methodism," page 12. But really, if the system of methodism contains some doctrines charged upon the young men, it cannot be remarkable for its purity. It were, however, to be wished, that learned men would not utterly forget that old moral precept, which enjoins us—to do to others what we would on an exchange of circumstances wish them to do to us: this precept once on a day gained the admiration of a pagan emperor, notwithstanding it was given in that old book called the New Testament, so little known to some learned men, and so much despised by others. Had this rule of equity and candour been observed, our author would not have asserted, that the Methodists held that "there is no necessity of good works." However, it hath been the way of the priests, from the beginning of the Gospel, to misrepresent the faith and practice of those who differed from them. Did not I do well then to shew you the perfect harmony among the Babylonish, Jewish, Roman, and O——d clergy? and I fancy I shall have occasion to join to the list another very respectable fraternity, whose persons, parts, and principles are to be held in great estimation, and who hitherto have been without any mark of distinction conferred on them by the *Shaver*.

1. They held, "that faith without works is sufficient to salvation:" so says our Vindicator, and asserts that "this is one of the doctrines of Methodism." With men of letters and priestly reverence this bold assertion may pass for proof; nay, I know not how orthodox it may be held even in a C——n; but, amongst laymen and country women, the redundancy of whose learning has not quite destroyed their common sense, and whose attachment to the clergy has not as yet absorbed their regard to equity, it will re-

quire something like proof, before it is believed. And in behalf of laymen and old women, I would most humbly beg, that the learned Vindicator would *condescend* to give an instance or two in favour of this assertion, That "faith without works is sufficient to salvation," makes no part in the doctrine of Methodism; notwithstanding, from the *idleness* of many of the clergy, it appears to be the dependance of not a few gentlemen of the sacred order, who are well paid for believing, without attempting much work. Really it would not be amiss for the gentlemen parsons, who have been regularly educated, and the Methodist preachers who are said to be so erroneous, to come forth fairly to the light, and make a strict comparison of notes together, in point of industry in the work of the ministry, regularity in their conversation, benevolence of disposition, and works of mercy towards their fellow-creatures; and as faith is best known by the fruits it produceth, let those be deemed the heretics and infidels who have not those good works attending them, let them profess what faith they please.

To serve the present turn, like my brother authors, let me propose the following case to the consideration of my judicious readers, and many of them I am likely to have, to the no small mortification of somebody. There are a set of gentlemen, who are thought to know their Master's will, and are well paid for doing it; *but do it not:* and there are another set of men, who are very active and diligent in what they take to be their Master's will, but are thought in some cases to be mistaken: which of the two shall we think to be the best Christians? It is somewhat absurd to plead for good works, unless a man has got some to shew; for till once it appears that the clergy are laborious in the work of the ministry, we shall always find good works on the side of the Methodists; notwithstanding, in the present state of imperfection, we shall find them, like all other classes of people, attended with some defects.

But to attend to the point in question, Whether the Methodists in general hold that "faith without works is sufficient to salvation?" If by salvation our Vindicator means justification, pardon of sin, and acceptance with God, the Methodists hold, and he is an infidel who holds not, that believers "are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus," Rom. iii. 24. "And that

to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." And that the man is "blessed unto whom God imputeth righteousness *without* works," Rom. iv. 5, 6. On the account of such sayings the Methodists and every Christian believes, that justification dependeth not on work, but merely on grace; and if the Scriptures, on account of the disuse of them, are not thought sufficient to establish a point of such grand importance, we have the *Rule of Faith* subscribed to by every parson of the Church of England to keep us in countenance.

Art. XI. An article which looks excessively awkward upon the Vindicator's treatment of the Methodists, who hold, that "Good works cannot precede justification, therefore can by no means be the cause of it, and that they are utterly unconcerned therein." The article is the very same, and therefore it is methodism, and the Vindicator is a Methodist for subscribing it; for it says, "We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour by faith, and not for our own works or deservings; wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the homily of justification." This doctrine is absolute Methodism, and yet it stands in the articles; and yet it is subscribed by all who have a benefice in view; and yet they are heretics and schismatics who hold it, and must be expelled the university.

Learn hence, that if you hold it not, your subscribing of it brings you into the way of preferment; but to hold what you subscribe is the very way to expulsion.

The *Bible*, the *Articles*, and *Homilies* of the *Church* of *England*, and every Christian, holdeth, along with the Methodists, that justification is independent upon any works of the party justified; but to say that the Methodists hold that good works are not necessary in the Christian life, is a low, mean, and pitiful slander, which neither the Vindicator nor his abettors are capable of proving. And though I have not the honour of wearing a gown, and consequently am no gentleman, I humbly beg that their reverences of the university would offer some proof to the public, who want this assertion to be cleared up, the bare word of a priest being thought somewhat insufficient, having lost

much of its weight within this last century. And till that is done, I shall be bold enough to whisper in the ear of my very good friend the public, that if he wants to hear of a faith without works, or works without faith, or to have them so confounded that neither of them can be known, he must not go to the Lock Chapel, Blackfriars, or the Tabernacle; but must even attend on such of the doctors of the established church who never were suspected of Methodism, and there he will have it just equal to his wish.

But the Methodists have no notion of preaching any faith but a living faith, productive of good works wherever it is planted, as our Vindicator very well knows, if ever he read their many sermons and other pieces, which have so much attracted the attention of the world of late years, to the great concern of many a high clergyman. And that very faith, which they consider as justifying faith, they represent as the spring of all Christian holiness. And the very reason which they give for their looking upon many a well-paid parson as no more than a dignified infidel, is because that the parson's faith does not *work* by love to God and the souls of men.

Do not, good gentlemen, I pray you now, talk about good works till ye discover more love to the souls of the people than to the *tithe of their crops*. Exercise yourselves more in good works, and all good men will have the better opinion of your faith. Discover, my worthy rectors, that you have some sense of humanity remaining in you by relieving your oppressed curates; let them share in the income proportionably to the part they bear in the service of the church. This is a good and equitable work; this is your duty to do, and what they have a right to expect.

Let not a gentleman who, as to learning, virtue, and good sense, is equal with yourself, stand hat-in-hand before you, as so much your inferior, seeing he lacks nothing but a patron to make him in all respects your equal. It is hard, gentlemen, very hard, that he should do all the drudgery of the trade, and receive little above the tenth of the profit. This is no good work. This argues little in favour of your faith. This cannot be equalled by the conduct of the most oppressive tradesman of the lay kind. Therefore, worthy gentlemen, pay the curates their proportion of the tithes and offerings. Convince the public, reverend worthies,

that you have some care about their souls eternal welfare, by endeavouring to instruct the lowest of the people in the knowledge of God's word, if you think that fit to be known; and if you have an unfavourable opinion of that, do teach them a little that people may have no cause to say they pay their pence for nothing. People will animadvert upon the carelessness of the parson, whilst the parishioners are never sought after but for their dues, the receiving of which is in many cases thought not to be among the good works which are any way akin to a Gospel faith. Look a little, then, into their spiritual estate, as well as their temporal. Be willing to take a little pains, as well as to receive full pay. Do the duties, as well as receive the emoluments of the profession. For famishing the curate, and letting the people die for lack of knowledge, are works not very amiable.

When ye see any neighbouring ministers more conscientious, more laborious, and consequently more useful and better followed than yourselves, do not traduce them as heretics and schismatics; for thereby you only trumpet forth your own infamy, and make yourselves the mock of conscientious lay people, who have no other view in religious duties than the interest of the Redeemer. Do not let people know the rottenness of your foundation, by imprudently discovering your fear for the church; for every body knows, that knows the Bible, that no church can be in danger besides the church of antichrist; and all your priestly explosions from the pulpit, when you venture there, all your inveighing against your neighbours of a different persuasion, only tends to let us laymen into the secret; namely, that you are not upon the true foundation. Pay a little more regard to the Sabbath than heretofore, worthy sirs. Do not let the people have it to say, when they are reproved for Sabbath-breaking, "The parson does so, and so may we." Remember, ye are well paid for keeping up the form of religion, and there is another world beyond this, and there is another Judge besides him in the b—p's court. A Judge who will not venerate a man the more for his gown, and who very probably may be strict in his inquiries after what ye have done in return for your tithes and many fees. And I doubt you will find this Judge to be more on the side of the poor than that of the clergy. Begin then a reformation of your parishes in your own families, and do not

convince the people that religion is a farce, made use of only for the emolument of the priest, the mercenary principles of whom we country people account the very spring of *atheism*. Do not belie your neighbours, good gentlemen, as you usually do once at least in a year, not much to the honour of holy mother church; but even give the dissenters, and the very devil his due: and although ye dare not meddle with the latter, yet be propitious to the former; for they are asses upon which many of you have ridden to a fat benefice: the tamest asses that ever a clerical Balaam laid his leg over, and therefore ought not to be maltreated, lest in the issue they should assume courage enough to bruise the foot of the rider against the wall.

But where am I going, or what have I been writing? My zeal for the gownsmen has carried me away very far from the point under debate, for which I hope to have a few encomiums given me by my good friends the Critical Reviewers; to whom I beg my printer to present my compliments through the channel of his press, and my very grateful acknowledgments of the honours they have done me in classing me with Thomas Brown, Esq, of facetious memory, and the worthy author of the *Midnight Spy*. An honour, I assure you, reader, which they do not confer upon every author they review, no, not even upon all the old standers in the literary canton.

THE

ARIANS' AND SOCINIANS' MONITOR;

BEING

A VISION

THAT

A YOUNG SOCINIAN TEACHER

LATELY HAD,

IN WHICH HE SAW, IN THE MOST EXQUISITE TORMENT, HIS TUTOR, WHO DIED SOME YEARS AGO; AND HAD FROM HIS OWN MOUTH THE FEARFUL RELATION OF WHAT BEFEL HIM AT AND AFTER HIS DEATH.

TOGETHER

WITH MANY INSTRUCTIONS RELATING TO THE SOCINIAN ERRORS; BY ALL WHICH HE IS TURNED TO THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL, AND SUBSCRIBETH HIS NAME

ANTISOCINUS.

THE

ARIANS' AND SOCINIANS' MONITOR.

INURED to self-deceptions from my youth up, I laughed at the fantastical whims of enthusiastic whigs, the dreams of anabaptists, and cunning inventions of mercenary priests; cranumian phantasms of weak and unstable men; for by such names I was pleased to call the glorious doctrines of the everlasting Gospel. The doctrine of the Trinity in Unity I contemned, purely because I could not fully comprehend it.

Reason, saith I, is the touchstone of every truth; the even balance in which revelation must be weighed. The oracle of God must be hushed in silence, till reason, adorable reason, is free to speak her mind: even then it is at the peril of revelation to utter one word that is beyond the reach of our godlike reason. Every thing that is divinely mysterious I am wont to treat with derision and contempt. Mysteries in Religion! saith I, mere nonsense! There is nothing mysterious in it! Nothing mysterious required to be believed. Reason alone, that noble principle, must give the sanction to every truth divine. If illustrious reason will not condescend to sign a certificate for truth, let her wander as a vagabond upon the face of the earth; no reasonable Christian, sure, will venture to receive her.

Let fanatics and enthusiasts receive and rely on what they call holy mysteries; for my own part, I am determined, that my reason shall act supreme with me, both in matters of faith and practice.

Thus elevated with a high opinion of my rational faculties, and pregnated with the strongest resolutions never to admit of any other rule but the dictates of my own reason, one evening lately I walked abroad into the fields to meditate on the happy estate of mankind, as being capable of meriting, at the hands of the Omnipotent, a right to every divine donation, every eternal blessing.

The road which I took led me into a pleasant avenue, on the one hand decorated with an uniform row of well-

grown oaks, extending their spreading arms almost to the opposite side of the verdant path, clasped with the supple branches of yielding elms, which in an even row decorated the hedge on the left. A grassy turf, barely sheered by the nimble teeth of the bleating sheep, spread the floor of the avenue ten yards in breadth; every sullying excrement was carefully swept up by the yielding broom of the industrious shepherd, who watchfully followed the fleecy innocents.

Thus alone, secluded from the noise of mankind, I began to improve what I beheld in this pleasant but lonesome avenue. How beautifully, thought I, do these stately oaks, with their straight and solid, their smooth and massy trunks, extended arms, and clothed branches, represent the man, the happy man, that is fixed in rational ideas, and guided only by the dictates of his reason. See how the penetrating root dig deep into the bosom, and with their forked talons clasp the entrails of their mother earth; the grizly stem smiles at the angry rage of stormy gusts which wreak their vengeance against it. It stands unmoved. It mocks the fury of the most violent storm. Just so is the man who makes reason his only rule. Nothing moves him. He smiles at the gusts of enthusiastic zeal. He laughs at the dreams of fanatics, and mocks at the mysteries of Luther and Calvin. His mind lays deep hold of directing reason, and he stands in his paradisiacal rectitude.

These dwarfish shrubs (continued I) are the lively types of pedantic bigots, who are blindly carried away with enthusiastic fancies to believe in irrational mysteries called by them the doctrines of grace, but which really are the subtle inventions of designing men, as the shrub is diminutive when compared with the stately oak, so are those men compared with these who are the happy disciples of reason.

As I thus continued pleasing myself with this improvement of my evening's solitude, and blessing God that I was not as other men, even as these fanatics and irrational Christians are, but believed and acted according to the dictates of my own reason, I came near to the end of the avenue, and the path became extremely dark and narrow. The opposite trees did so interweave their branches with each other, that no gleam of light could penetrate through the shade.

It would now have appeared wisdom to have turned my face toward's home; but by some unseen power I was seized with a perfect suspension of thought, and heedlessly walked forward, till at last I found I had got out of the avenue, and a dusky light appearing, discovered to me a variety of frightful objects. The place into which I was now got, bore the grisly aspect of a forest devoured by fire; no blooming flower nor verdant leaf was to be seen in all its vast extent; only desolation and destuction. All, all was devastation.

I attended occasionally to the fearful noise, that as I thought were, and afterwards proved to be, subterraneous. Sometimes I heard, like the noise of many waters the tempestuous roaring of foaming billows, in fury dashing themselves against the scornful rocks. Anon, I heard the clinking of chains, the clangour of weapons, and the hideous yellings of persons in exquisite torments. Great was the surprise I was now in; my hair stood erect, and the blood in my veins became cold as the northern ice, my flesh shuddered on my bones, an unusual tremour invaded my once courageous heart, and ghastly fear sat trembling on my astonished countenance. My nerves became lax, and, in my apprehension, the joints of my limbs were unhinged, and dewy sweat issued forth from every pore of my skin. I had neither courage to stand the shock, nor strength to fly from the awful appearances of imminent danger. I would gladly have found the avenue through which I entered this solitary waste; but to no purpose did I look for it, now it was hid from my sight.

In vain I wished that my rambling fancy had been better guarded, and not exposed me to these nocturnal dangers. Long ere now the radiant sun having quenched his fiery beams in the western depths, had left the earth enveloped in darkness, which glooming sat on every beclouded object. Nor did the heavens above my head bear a more pleasant aspect; every luminous body having hid its refulgent face in the bosom of a sable extended cloud. All these circumstances concurring to display the horrors of the place, made me conclude that I was certainly got into the gloomy regions of inexorable Pluto; but whether I was dead or alive, I knew not.

In the meanwhile I wished, I earnestly wished myself

at home, and resolved, that if ever I reached my peaceful habitation, I would henceforth correct my wanderings, and regulate them by the judicious rules of safety.

As I was turning over these resolves, I heard a terrible subterraneous noise, infinitely more horrible than that fabulously ascribed to Vulcan's smiths, in the convulsive bowels of the mounts Ætna and Vesuvius. Anon, the earth opened her jaws close by the place on which I trembling stood, and belched forth an hideous quantity of curling smoke and streaked fire intermingled with squalid spectres; the fiery smoke lifted up its grisly summit, like the towering head of a cloud-pierced pyramid. When the spectres had reached the middle path of the aerial regions, they sunk downward and plunged into the belching throat that had just now disgorged them. Still it continued with hideous roarings to vomit up brimstone, smoke, and coals of fire, mingled with the howling ghosts of the accurst to these abysmal flames. Notwithstanding these fearful phænomena were enough to have spread distraction over all my reasonable faculties, I found myself, to my own amazement, in the perfect use of my mind, frightened although I was.

Moveless I stood on the dangerous brink of the issuing pit, nor had power to turn me to the right hand or left. One step forward would have plunged me into these devouring flames which proceeded from the unquenchable burnings, beneath. Here I stood trembling with fear of the dire event. The eruption beginning to abate, I heard, as I thought human voices more distinctly! all was howling and sorrowful complaint. Dreadful was the yell that filled my ears; all which I looked on as the most perfect indications of inexpressible torments. Weepings and wailings which I heard, I concluded were the sure diagnostics of consummate pain.

The eruption being now over, I thought I heard a voice which was familiar to me, and which expressed the most intolerable anguish. Being by this time somewhat inured to this prodigy, I at last ventured to look down to make what discoveries I could. O horrible! here was a discovery that quashed reason itself. Amazement chills my blood even now when I relate it.

I looked down into this frightful cave: but what did I

see? No gilded beauties, but the stupendous arches of dread perdition, O! shall the direful idea ever be erased from my mind? A rolling flood of flaming liquid did play in these sable, these frightful vaults. Every revolving billow turned up to the inflammatory surface an innumerable company of floating spectres, and at the same time with its sinking front immerged a number equal to that it turned up. Dreadful was the howl, inexpressible were their direful yellings! I saw likewise standing on this burning lake a numberless company of squalid infernals, armed with flaming instruments of death, with which they exercised the most unaccountable cruelty on the unhappy worldlings, who had involved themselves into unspeakable torment, inextricable ruin.

In the midst of all, I beheld one person who stood for some time on the sulphurous billows, surrounded by an enraged company, who with red hot irons kept pushing against him. He stood aghast, and fearfully stared at me. He looked as if he would fain have spoken, but I perceived that his torments prevented him. He waved his hand to his tormentors, as I took it begging for respite.

Deep despair and wild distraction lowered on his condemned countenance. He raved! he foamed! he wrestled! and then sunk down in silent despair; sullen and pensive, whilst the direful floods of omnipotent vengeance rolled upon him.

In this place I perceived no intermission of the incessant floods that rolled along in one continued circle, ever running, but never at an end. These discoveries, I trust, will make me ever fearful of landing in this place of torment.

At last he lifted himself up from the flaming bed, waved his hand, and called me by my name; and fixing my eye intently upon him, I knew him to be the learned Doctor ———, with whom I had lived as a pupil, who died some few years ago.

Amazed to see my venerable tutor in such a deplorable condition, I cried out, "O horrible! What do I see! My learned, my pious tutor in hell! Am I not asleep, deceived by my deluding fancy?—It cannot be he! A man whose doctrine and conversation was so governed by the dictates of reason, cannot be in hell. No, it can never be! Thou

tormented ghost, I adjure thee, by the greatest of names to undeceive me! Art thou he? Am I in a dream, or not? Is that—but I cannot doubt it—Tell me, is that the receptacle of the damned?

To which the ghost replied: "Deceived mortal, I see you are surprised to find a person in hell, who in life you esteemed as highly as an apostle. You see I am not as you vainly fancied, in the heavenly mansions of eternal felicity: but, after all my pretensions of sanctity, am swallowed up unhappily; I am plunged into the unfathomable abyss of divine indignation, from whence, alas! there is no redemption. No, it ceaseth now! it ceaseth for ever. Ten thousands worlds, if I had them, now, for one twelvemonth's respite. But oh! there is no respite; no intermission of these intolerable pains. Oh! piercing, piercing pain! more violent far than fire, than burning coals of juniper. Here the keen arrows of incensed justice, the irresistible wrath of a holy God do pierce me through with unspeakable sorrows. Oh! that I had never been born! Oh! that I had never been a deceiver! Oh! that I had been a husbandman, a ploughman, or any thing but a preacher. Alas, a preacher, a false preacher, endureth a double hell! Oh! unhappy, wretched preacher, that is rewarded in this fiery gulf!

"Ye deluded spirits, who by my fallacious deceit have been blinded, and are hither got before me, forbear, O forbear to throw your flaming darts against me. Why, O why do you thus torment me? Have not I torment enough already? Sure I have afflictions enough in sustaining the shocks of omnipotent vengeance, without your malicious piercing arrows being pointed at me. Woeful day!—accursed hour! that ever I denied the Lord, the omnipotent Saviour!

"Bear with me, thou deceived mortal, for my pains force words from me, words that are unknown on earth. Oh! for a few moments' respite whilst I speak to a friendly mortal, and make known to him the horrors of this place! Ye, my tormentors, allow me time only, so much time, as to recite the journal of one twenty-four hours of my unhappy being: grant me this small favour, it may be the last I shall request of you through the revolving ages of a

never-ending eternity. An hour's intermission, O my tormentors! It cannot in any wise prejudice you, whereas to me it may be of great advantage,

"Hold! do hold your hands, whilst I declare unto others what hath befallen a Socinian apostle.

"Thus you see, Mr.————, I cannot, by the most pressing entreaties, obtain so long a respite from my torment as to communicate to you what hath befallen me; but in the midst of unspeakable sorrow am obliged to converse with you, for my tormentors are inexorable.

"I lived, as you know, to advanced years amongst you, and your general opinion was, that I was gathered to my people in a good old age. Oh, the fatal mistake! an old age indeed; but alas! a bad old age it has proved. When the harbingers of my death began to visit me, my anxious pupils ministered unwearied attendance. My fellow-teachers paid their most tender regard, by praying for and conversing with me. Both they and I were apprehensive that my sickness was unto death, my dissolution near approaching.

"All proper means were used for my relief, but all in vain. No lengthening out of our days beyond the limits of God's decree; no, for he hath numbered our days, and our months are with him; he hath set bounds to our habitation that we cannot pass over it. Physic afforded no relief; my pupils were disconsolate; they thought I was the most apostolic teacher in the world, and if death should cruelly bereave them of me, they knew not how to repair their loss, nor who was worthy to supply my place, when, as they thought, I should be employed in the more immediate presence of the infinite Jehovah.

"My friends miserably comforted me with my supposed good works. O sir! say they, how comfortably may you die, when you consider the great deliverances you have wrought for the church.—You have relieved her reasonable members from the irrational doctrines of Calvinism, overturned original sin, and the doctrine of imputed righteousness, by your valuable books, which no man but yourself could have wrought. Therein you shewed most excellently, how that man is capable to atone for his own sins, and to work out his own salvation from sin and wrath.

"As they said, so I foolishly believed, that those anti-

christian heresies were meritorious in the sight of God. I depended greatly on the opinion of men, and thougt that my humility, self-denial, and charity would be a prevalent plea before the throne of the Almighty. I thought on my death-bed that I felt a great deal of joy and comfort on looking back and viewing a well-spent life, as mine at that time appeared to be. I trusted in my own holiness, and the mercy of God; but, alas! I have since learned that I had none of the former, and that the latter doth not flow in the channel I sought for it in.

"In my latter hours I enjoyed composure of mind, from an expectation that my pure nature would soon be translated to the ethereal climate, where nothing but holiness can dwell; not in the least mistrusting a false, a treacherous heart, that has undone me, but vainly fancied I stood in paradisaical rectitude. O the deceit! O the fallacy of my hope, which lulled me asleep in delusive fancies! My soul conceived such elevated notions of the divine reward, which I thought I had merited by my labours, that she longed for the dissolving moment of separation, trusting in the clemency of the Gospel lawgiver, who I thought would bend his law and justice to suit the circumstances of his reasonable creatures. O dreadful! how shall I relate it? the hour! the appointed hour, the destined moment of separation, drew nigh. My solicitous soul entreated the pale, the ghastly messenger, to cut short his work, and make a speedy dissolution of the mortal union. Reluctant nature struggled against the fermenting poison of the cankered arrow of nature's destroyer.

"Convulsive pangs invaded the nervous fabric, and half persuaded the weary heart to forbear to throb. Anon, nature, which just before seemed to be vanquished by the prevalency ef the fever, recruits its strength, and mustereth all its powers to resist, as long as might be, the unfrustrable rage of rapacious death. But alas! the time, the unhappy moment arrives! Vanquished nature doth at last submit, yieldeth to the superior power of all-conquering death. Here—the dread surprise! the unexpected, unhappy turn! My deceived ghost came smiling forth, in full expectation of the righteous reward.—But soon, alas! too soon she was convinced of her fatal mistake. No sooner arrived she at the pale portal of the lifeless lips, but she beheld—Oh!

how shall I name it? She beheld—O horrible! she beheld a company of devils in the chamber waiting to carry her thence. Precipitately back she turned to seek for sanctuary in the deserted body—but now, alas! the gates of mortality were shut, the body refused to receive its former tenant. She looked to the right hand and to the left for a way to escape, but no avenue was open for retreat. She looked up to heaven, but could not stand the shock. Oh dreadful! she beheld the Omnipotent loosing his engines, and beginning to play his direful vengeance upon her. To avoid the horrible calamity, she looked downward and beheld tempestuous destruction from beneath moved to meet her at her coming.

"In the midst of all her hurry and unspeakable confusion —the sly seducing fiends, who had attended me incognito, and administered false instructions and comfort to me during life, with inconceivable fury, like so many ferocious panthers, leaped upon and seized me with their scorching talons; whose tormenting touch diffused hell through the whole being of the unhappy prisoner.

"No longer do they act in disguise: having made sure work of my destruction, they threw off every mask, and appeared devils indeed! Now a tremendous scene was unfolded! The merciless furies forcibly dragged me to appear before the dreadful, the flaming throne.

Infinite amazement, horrible astonishment, seized me, when I beheld the same Saviour whom I had denied on earth, now filling the majestic, the judgment seat, filled with all the fulness of uncreated Deity, the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in him. Infinite numbers of glorious spirits were placed around the refulgent throne, casting their crowns at the feet of him who sat on the throne, and singing, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,' &c. every one clothed with the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ. The terrible Judge addressed me, and said, 'Friend, how camest thou hither, not having on a wedding garment?' Alas! now my boasted reason failed, and horrible guilt surrounded me; dread confusion environed me on every hand. Self-convicted and self-condemned, I could not answer a word. All my artful evasions of truth, my contempt of the person and righteousness of Christ, perverting the sacred Scriptures to

establish my accursed heresies, and the despite I had done to the grace, doctrines, and servants of God, all appeared as dreadful witnesses and advocates against me. I lived in hopes of being judged by a mild judge, according to a yielding law, but alas! I found an inflexible law, and an inexorable judge. No allowance was made for mine infirmities, no abatement would the law admit of. No! not in the least, either eternal and perfect obedience, or perfect and eternal sufferings.

"The imperial judge, who filled the majestic seat, with stern vengeance frowning on his irreconcilable countenance, and dire displeasure lowering on his tremendous brow, pronounced on me the dread, the irrevocable sentence, the unchangeable doom of 'a wolf in sheep's clothing;' saying, 'Thou flock-destroying ravager, thou grace-despising, and God-denying sinner, where is now the God thou trustedst in? If reason is thy God, why does she not deliver thee from under my vengeful hand? Go learn, accursed spirit, go learn whether the torments of hell are infinite and of never-ending duration or not! Feel, wretched being! feel! endure all the ponderous weight of my falling vengeance! Hence, apostate! to the destined place of thy eternal abode! Here devils, receive your charge—away with the miscreant to utter darkness.'

"This said, the spouts of omnipotent vengeance were opened, and the issuing indignation of an angry God falling and breaking on my head (accursed, devoted to destruction), as a stream of flaming brimstone, did pierce me through with infinite sorrows.

"The obedient infernals no sooner received, but obeyed the charge, seized, and fettered me, with chains of all others the most dreadful; chains made of my own doctrines, from the pulpit and press, interdicted by the great lawgiver, God. O! amazing! that all my heretical opinions should be so interlaced, as to become a chain stronger than iron and harder than steel; but so it is, and I shall never, never, be able to break it.

"Being fettered and chained, the loathsome spirits who had attended me during life and death, dragged me before the awful tribunal to receive the condemning sentence, did now shoulder and bear me away, through the dreary passage, to this dark abode. In the lonesome avenue, that

leadeth from the gates of heaven to the bottomless gulf of perdition, I was frequently met by detached parties of patrolling goblins, who seemed to rejoice to see their companions bringing home to their gloomy abode *the learned, the holy doctor*, as in derision they called me. At last, unhappy moment! we arrived at the iron gates, which opened of their own accord to receive their frightened prey.

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, was I seized by the devouring jaws, and swallowed into the craving womb of abysmal hell, where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched.

"No sooner was I in these frightful mansions, but Arius and Socinus were apprized of my coming, by fresh bolts of divine indignation being thundered against their apostate heads.

"The moment I entered, I was environed by a numerous body of ghastly spectres, who, by my preaching and writings, had been hardened against the truth, and heedlessly drowned in everlasting despair; they railed against my fallacy, and cursed my indefatigable diligence in destroying of them, and, in fury unspeakable, plunged me into the bosom of a flaming billow; still they continued their hellish reproach, and dragged my intoxicated ghost through the reeking liquid. And the more fiercely the wrath of the Almighty doth beat upon them, the more intent are they in renewing my torments. Always, incessantly, does the breath of Jehovah, as a stream of brimstone, with ardour intense, continue to burn within me! Myriads of skilful fiends seem to employ all their wisdom, contriving how to aggravate my pain.

"This, alas! is the unalterable state of your revered apostle, who you supposed was ranged in heaven near the choir of the ancient evangelists. Believe me, Mr. ——, hell is not a fiction, as mistaken mortals may dream. The wrath of God is something more than a bare separation from his joyful presence. The pains of hell are not, as you believe, the dreams of fanatics and enthusiasts, but real, inexpressible pain! unsupportable anguish! increasing daily as more souls arrive."

As he had thus spoken, a flaming billow rolled upon, and overwhelmed him, and it was a considerable time before I saw him again. O! thought I, if it is thus with the

tutor, how will it be in the end with the pupil? If the leader had fallen into the ditch, certainly the followers must, if they walk in his ways and are governed by his directions. If I am not in a dream or trance, for my own part, if ever I reach home again, I will examine my Bible better, that I may know for myself truth from error; for it is a fearful thing thus to fall into the avenging hands of a denied God. I cannot, no! I cannot endure devouring flames, nor dwell with unquenchable burnings. But I hope it is only a dream. O if it may prove only a dream, I should be exceeding glad. But I was awake when I came from home, awake when I entered this horrible place. No, no, it cannot be a dream, it must be even as I see it.—Oh amazing! my tutor, so highly esteemed in life, in this condition; it is surely he, I know his voice. Yes, yes, it is he.

As I was thus reasoning concerning what I heard and saw, my tutor was brought up to the surface; and after he recovered himself a little, he stood erect, and said:

"Unhappy soul, to whom, whilst I lived, my mouth was as an oracle, and gained your credence and attention sooner than the voice of God in the Scriptures of truth, as you hold my memory venerable, hearken to what I say unto you. You seem greatly to question the truth of the vision which you now behold, but you may know of a truth that it is even too true, too real indeed! and that it cannot be otherwise, you will plainly see before you depart from hence. Wretched pupil, you and your Socinian brethren may know that it is not love to all, or any of you, that prompts me thus to expose to the world what hath befallen me. No! there is no love, no tenderness and compassion in the smoky regions of the damned.—Rage, hatred, envy, and malice fill every breast, and pensive lower on every beclouded brow. But my reason is this, and none other: when I arrived in these horrible mansions, I lifted up my eyes, being in exquisite torment, and beheld troops of my disciples posting after me to the same pit of destruction. Right well knowing that their arrival would greatly add to my already insupportable anguish, with the rich libertine in the Gospel, I raised my voice from the belly of this bottomless abyss, and spake in the language of horrid despair, if by any means I may prevent the arrival of my

brethren in falsehood, and the souls by me deceived, in hell, to my unspeakable sorrow.—I have already more than I can bear, but bear it I must; and am fearful of its increase, for I see you and your brethren speeding to this dreadful goal.—O why, why will you follow me, ye deluded ones! As for me, my state is unalterably fixed, the die is cast, my loss is irreparable, and my afflictions remediless; for there is neither work nor device in the grave. The irrevocable doom is past, my tree is fallen, and in hell it must lie, burning, but never to be consumed! dying, yet never dead! But for you, you are yet in a land of hope, on the acting side of death, on the mortal side of Jordan, not out of the reach of mercy, and the light of the Gospel of truth shineth around you. Cast off then your errors, and cleave to the truths of the Bible, the verbal report of which, as rational creatures, you are capable of receiving; and it will be your condemnation if you do it not. For I can tell you, if ever salvation do reach your unhappy souls, it must come through the same truths that I taught you to deny, but am myself, though too late, alas! convinced of. Oh! that I had owned them in time, but now my owning them is only forced, and by no means acceptable. But that you may avoid the horrible destruction into which I am involved, hearken to the word of admonition.

"Consider your destructive error relating to the Godhead; you talk as I did, when I lived amongst you, of an uncreated, supreme, and eternal God; two who are created and subordinate. You say that the first person of the Deity created the second, and the second created the third. You say that the Deity of Christ is subordinate; but, believe me, if ever you are so unhappy as to see him in the terrible manner in which I beheld him on the judgment seat, you will have done with talking of subordinacy in the Godhead. His terrors, the awful terrors of omnipotence, will pierce you through with infinite sorrow. His tremendous majesty will frighten you! Will make the strongest heart amongst you to wax feeble, and the ruddiest face to gather blackness.

"Is not this infinite vengeance that I sustain? Is not this almighty wrath that rolls in incessant floods upon me? Yet this is the very wrath and vengeance of the Saviour whom I denied. Nothing less than Omnipotence could thus

torment, and along with the torment, convey sustaining strength. Is he a creature? No, verily, this is uncreated indignation that falls upon me. Ah, besotted! befooled! as I was. Consider how irrational it is to talk of a created God. Nothing can be God but infinity; but the highest creature is only a finite being, therefore not God. Was yonder being who pronounced my decisive doom only a creature? Why then did the terrors of Godhead strike me, before the tremendous throne. Could creatures' terrors thus pierce me through with infinite torment! racking sorrow! Is he only a creature, under whose vengeful hand all the infernal myriads do sprawl in the utmost horror and agony?

"Deep infatuation! false reason, that denies the supremacy of the Son. Your reason, were it not grossly perverted, would readily see in the sacred volume, that the Father is supreme, the Son supreme, and the Holy Ghost supreme: and that these three are so inseparably united, as to be only *One* ever-living and supreme *God*. Blinded creatures! O my disciples! will you believe nothing but what your reason can comprehend? Is your reason finite or infinite? If it is but finite, as you know it is, how can you think thereby to grasp infinity? But the light of your reason is only darkness, therefore it conceiveth irrational ideas of the deep things of God.

"Be ye assured, that when you land in these intolerable mansions, you will then, if not before, repent that you give the testimony of reason the preference to that of the divine oracles. O! what will you do, wretched men, when your reason bears testimony against you? It is a dreadful thing for a man to be witnessed against by his own reasonable faculties. Yet so it must be when you die, if you hearken not to the voice of truth, whose invariable dictates instruct the most enlightened reason to submit itself to revelation. For my own part, I confess to you, that I am condemned as a wilful idolater; and it will fare no better with you, if you recant not in time, for you are all wilful idolaters. You knowingly worship a Being whom you believe to be only a dignified creature: now know, that the worship of any Being who is not essentially God, how great soever that Being is, is only rank idolatry. You know likewise that our Arian and Socinian sect doth, contrary to the law

of God and right reason itself, introduce more gods than one. What is this but paganism? The truth is, we, who were of the Socinian tribe whilst on earth, now we are in hell are sunk lower in the bottomless abyss, and endure far higher degrees of torment, than the infidels who worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, and all the hosts of heaven. O blind and perverted reason, that by trusting to thy false dictates, I have despised the truth and unhappily destroyed myself. O cruelty, never to be forgotton! Treachery, never to be forgiven! Through self-deception, cruel in its nature, I have lost, ruined myself!

"Unhappy men, when you come to view your tenets in the light of eternity, as your teacher and fellow-heresiarch now unhappily does, you will see that the professed atheists and we do stand on a level. They deny the being of a God in terms that are obvious and direct; we deny the same Being in a subtle indirect manner; for in denying the divinity of the Son, the whole Deity is denied: for the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Spirit, is one and the self-same Godhead, differing only in the manner of subsistence; therefore, in denying one of the divine subsistences, strictly speaking, you deny all the three. But as for my disciples, you deny two of these divine subsistences, and ascribe unto them some kind of unscriptural super-angelic qualities. Pray what do you call this? Is it not real atheism? Cease from following me, I desire you. Burn, O burn my books against the truth, and forget my irrational heresies. Cease, I say, cease from following after me, before you are swallowed, to my unspeakable distraction in the same perdition with me. Believe what the Scriptures say of him whom you deny, If any man believe not that *Jesus* is the *Eternal I AM*, he shall die in his sins.

"A second sentiment of yours, which I advertise you of, and warn you to recant, is the good opinion you have of your supposed inherent purity, in opposition to the voice of religion and the dictates of common sense. O that I had never maligned the truth by asserting that the doctrine of original sin is a fallacy: Alas! though my repentance is sincere, it is now too late: Is not that predominant pride which is peculiar to the tribes of the Deists, Socinians, and Arians, a strong demonstration of our original depra-

vity? Is it not pride that swelleth our haughty reason to that degree, that it not only vies with, but even supersedes revelation? We are wont to say, that we will believe nothing but what our reason can comprehend. The native meaning of this declaration is, that the word of God may err, but reason is infallible. What is this better than popish pride, infidel blindness, and Turkish arrogance. Believe me, my followers, if you choose to be governed by the dictates of carnal reason, rather than divine revelation, you will find that yours will do by you as mine hath done by me; it will plunge you into hell in the end. Consider, my deluded followers, that if we by our reason had been capable of knowing the whole mind of God, there had been no need of revelation, no need of the 'Holy Ghost being sent down from heaven to lead his people into all truth; to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.'

"Doth not your inconsistency in preaching, sometimes contradicting one day what you advance the other, plainly prove the insufficiency of reason to grasp infinite mysteries. Ah! my disciples, how can you think to escape the damnation of hell?—seeing, though you profess to hearken to the voice of reason, you only listen partially to her.

"Reason tells you, that it is irrational to preach and unpreach, to contradict in one sermon what you preach in another. But how can you do otherwise, if you adhere not to the voice of revelation, which is perfectly uniform, as reason also doth allow. But you and I are wont to charge the Scriptures with contradiction; I am now convinced, indeed, that they are one chain of uniform truth. But, alas! you remain unconvinced; and lo! I see you posting after me to the paths of perdition. Woe is me, for they will not stop till they be in hell, notwithstanding all my admonitions!

Unhappy disciples! are you not guilty of self-contradictions every day? Do not you declare that you will believe nothing but what your reason can comprehend? And notwithstanding this declaration, you believe that you are possessed of rational immortal spirits, and you cannot comprehend how, or in what manner, the spirits dwell in you. Your reason tells you, that no creature is or ought to be an object of religious adoration; but, contrary to the dictates of common sense, you worship Jesus Christ, whom you are

taught to call as a creature. Your reason tells you, that God must be an infinite, uncreated, supreme Being: but contrary to all reason, you and I are wont to talk of a finite, created, and subordinate God. Witness heaven and earth, if these and many other glaring contradictions are not so many plain symptoms of natural depravity and darkness!

"As long as you believe yourselves exempt from natural defilement, and in no danger by sin; as long as you cry up your own inherent power and worth, so long are you in a state of condemnation, from which nothing can save you but the atoning blood of Christ, which sacrifice I taught you to despise. Blindness as to your own wants and danger being a certain testimony of your depravity, and of the hardness of your hearts against God.

"Remember, that as long as you continue in that good opinion you have of yourselves, so long as you are enemies to the cross of Christ, blasphemous contradictors of God's holy word, that hath judiciously concluded all men under sin, and declared them dead in trespasses and sins, children of wrath, &c. O that I had preached thus while I lived! then had not my hell been so hot as, alas, I find it! If you are so unhappy as to follow me to this place of torment, you will soon be convinced, that your boasted natural light is only darkness; that your virtue, so much talked of, is only painted vice; your strength imbecility; and that your pretended humility is none other but pride in disguise. Oh! the Socinians' hell is hot, seven times hotter than that of the professed pagans.

"A third evil of a damning nature which attendeth your heretical tribes is, denying the imputation of Christ's righteousness for justification, for pardon, and acceptance; a doctrine of God's word which none ever died in the denial of, and escaped the damnation of hell. Consider, my unhappy followers, that I, having seen the mysteries of eternity, must be allowed capable of teaching you lessons, that you, in a state of mortality, are utter strangers unto: and if you submitted yourselves to my instruction when I lived on earth, with far more reason you ought to attend to me now, when my knowledge is refined by the flames of hell.

"In denying the imputation of Christ's righteousness for the sinner's pardon and acceptance, you in effect deny the justice and truth of *Jehovah*.—Justice hath said, 'the soul

that sinneth shall die,'—truth is engaged to see the decree executed. Now, either the sinner must die in himself, or in some other person who stands in the relation of surety for him: if the sinner die in himself, then is their salvation for none, for all have sinned: but if he die in his surety, or if his surety die for him, then what his surety did for him must be imputed to him for his acceptance. But as I taught you, so you say, that he died not in his surety, neither needs he to die in himself—as a just consequence of this, the mercy and truth of God do both fall to the ground. Now if both the justice and truth of God be denied, God himself is denied, and you commence atheists on the spot.

"Let not you and your brethren strive to evade my arguments, and think yourselves somewhat better than atheists: for I can assure you, that the professed atheists and we, do compose only one canton in these infernal regions. Is the imputation of Christ's righteousness contrary to reason? Surely no! Do not you, Sir, remember that affair between your two neighbours, Messrs. *Austerity* and *Falshort*, that happened about seven years ago, a little before I died.

"Mr. *Falshort* stood charged in Mr. *Austerity's* books with the sum of a thousand pounds. *Austerity* called on him once and again for his money, but meeting with nothing but good words and fair promises instead of satisfactory payment, he resolved to have Mr. *Falshort's* circumstances tried, and upon trial found that he was not worth a thousand pence. *Austerity*, enraged at the disappointment, immediately arrested *Falshort* and laid him in jail, where he lay in a helpless and hopeless condition, often soliciting Mr. *Austerity* for a release. But *Austerity* obstinately persisted in his demands, either payment of the sum, or imprisonment during life.

"Mr. *Goodwill*, a neighbouring gentleman, and relation to Mr. *Falshort*, moved with pity and compassion towards his unfortunate friend, and being a man of substance and honour, went to Mr. *Austerity*, unknown to Mr. *Falshort*, and resolved to deliver his poor insolvent friend out of prison; but scorning to have it said, that *Austerity* should be a loser by his friend *Falshort*, he paid down cheerfully the whole sum, to the satisfaction of the creditor, and deliverance of the insolvent: on which payment he obtained a discharge in full of all demands on the account of Mr. *Fal-*

short. Now the quere is, Did *Austerity* impute unto *Falshort* the payment of Mr. *Goodwill*, and account it the same as if *Falshort* himself had paid the debt?—You know he did. Ah! my disciples, your abused, yet boasted reason, if you recant not, will be a terrible devil to torment you when you arrive in these intolerable mansions, as my reason, alas! is the greatest of all my tormentors.

"But you say, you have no need of the righteousness of another, because you have power of yourselves to do that which is well-pleasing in the sight of God, and sufficiently work out your own salvation. Now if you could do so, you would at once stop my mouth. Ah! poor deluded mortals, you little know what it is to keep the law of God! —The commandment is exceeding broad!

"Does there never a vain thought pass through your mind? Does there never an idle word issue from your mouth? Do you in all things do unto others as you would they should do unto you? Unless you can answer the two first queries in the negative, and the latter in the affirmative, never boast of strength, but be mortified for want of will to keep either all or any precept of the moral law perfectly. Remember what the apostle Paul said of himself, 'to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not.' Can the damned to these dark regions extricate themselves out of the inconceivable anguish into which they are involved? Just as much power have you to work out your own salvation. You can as soon deliver yourselves from the torments of hell, if once you are swallowed up in it, as to deliver yourselves from the slavish bands of your pride and ignorance. Bewitched Socinians, let right reason have its course, and it will teach you to submit to revelation. O! how it pains me to find, that your blood is required at my hands, and to see you and your followers seeking death in the grossest of heresies. O! my disciples, 'this is our condemnation, that light is come into the world, and we have loved darkness rather than light, because our deeds are and have been evil.'"

As the Doctor had thus spoke, he was surrounded by a number of merciless furies, seized, and plunged into the flaming abyss, so that for some time I lost sight of him, and the smoke of his torment ascended up to heaven, darkening the air in its passage.

After the space of about half an hour, I perceived him cast up at the farther side of a rolling billow, and after some violent strugglings he stood erect, and in horrid distraction said—"Damnation! ah me! is this the damnation I was so often threatened with by the Calvinists, and as often laughed at it as a fanatic's dream? Is this the hell I so often heard of, and so fallaciously concluded to consist barely in a separation from the blissful presence of God? Alas! alas! these floods of vengeance that incessantly keep pouring in upon me, are something more than a bare separation. Blinded teacher who had, and blinded disciples who have, such diminutive notions of the torments of the damned.

"Wretched creatures! as I lift up my tormented eyes, I behold them posting onward toward the dreadful goal. If they arrive, my torment, though already inexpressible, will be greatly aggravated. Let me once more try what effect the eloquence of despair may have upon them. Who knows but it may retard their march!

"Still! still do you pursue your course, O my deluded followers! Still will ye remain tenacious of your errors, notwithstanding I plainly tell you to what dismal distraction they have reduced me! into what unalterable anguish they have plunged me! You persevere in your errors, therefore I must persevere in admonishing you. Hearken, sir, hearken Mr. ——, while I speak to you, and I charge you to tell your brethren what I say.

"Your denying the efficacy of divine grace in regeneration and sanctification is justly ranked among your damnable errors, and is one of the greatest heresies that ever I taught you. Had I experimentally known the influences of efficacious grace, I had never come to this place of torment, but had been joining yonder assembly, yonder glorious church of the first-born, which I see afar off written in heaven, beautified with all the lustre of grace both imputed and imparted, clothed with all the radiance of undecaying glory, filled with the inexpressible pleasures that issue from the throne of sovereign love and goodness. Alas! I never saw the need of the operations of unfrustrable grace till I arrived in eternity, and now too late I repent my denial thereof. The flames of hell give a lasting and full conviction of the truth of all the doctrines of the Gospel,

and at the same time that we, the spirits accursed, have no share in their salutary report and influence.

"When I lived on earth amongst you, I taught you to attend to the voice of carnal, corrupted reason; now I am in hell, I advise you to hearken to the voice of right reason, compared with the word of God.

"In the word of God conversion is accounted a quickening or raising from the dead: and reason tells you, that you cannot quicken or bring to life again the dearest, the most beloved object which death hath bereaved you of; nor can they quicken themselves, or they would never suffer their delicate bodies to become nauseously putrefied in the devouring womb of the hungry grave. For my own part, I find I cannot quicken my body again, or I would not lie here broiling in these flames.—Some of you have hair of an unlovely colour, of which you are ashamed, why do ye not change its colour agreeable to your minds? Others of you, my disciples, have legs or shoulders not shaped, eyes and temples not set, to your liking, why do you not mend the matter, and alter the proportion of your parts? Your own reason tells you, you cannot so much as alter the colour of a single hair of your head.

"But the quickening of the soul is an infinitely greater work. And is it reasonable to pretend to do the greater, when you are convinced you cannot do the less? O my disciples! how have I, your blind leader, darkened your understanding by my falsehoods. Woe is me! for my followers are at the point of falling into this horrible ditch.

"Again, the work of conversion is a creation of the soul anew. Now if divine grace is not the efficient in this soul-creation, you yourselves must be the efficient therein. Can you do it? You profess you can. First try your creating hand on a lesser job before you proceed to the greater. Can you create riches and honour? You love them well enough; if you have power to create them, why do so many of you go destitute of both? Can you create peace in the midst of trouble? Joy in the midst of sorrow? Ease in the midst of pain? Light in the time and place of darkness? Beauty instead of deformity? You know you cannot. But to create the soul 'in Christ Jesus to good works,' is a task by far more difficult. If you cannot, as your con-

sciences confess, do the least, is it not then a great degree of madness to pretend to do the greatest, even a work that requires Omnipotence to perform?

"Hearken, ye blinded mortals, hearken to the voice of him who hath condemned me! It is not effected by 'works of righteousness which we have done, but by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.'

"Again, inconsistent creature that you are (saith he to me), if you can create yourself anew, why do you not do it? Why are you so long ere you begin the work? If you must perform the work with your own single hand, you will be long in finishing it: most likely you may spend all your lifetime before you are half gone through with your work, then all your creating labour will be lost. Is it not highly unreasonable, when a man hears that he 'must be born again, created anew, quickened together with Christ,' &c. and at the same time believes that the renewing power is in himself, that he should sit down contented in unrenewed condition, not knowing but death may seize him every moment?"

Here I was cut to the heart, to see that instead of being guided wholly by reason, that in many things I both believed and acted contrary to reason. The old Doctor, perceiving my confusion, continued:—

"Consider, that if you deny the operations of the Comforter, you deny the Author of the Bible, who is the very God that made you. Here you may see that I taught you atheism in various forms. Oh! that you repented your receiving my instructions as sincerely as I repent teaching them! then would not my torment be increased by your arrival in hell. I do assure you, I recant all these blasphemous errors, though now, alas! it is too late. You may recant in time, as you are yet on the mortal side of the gulf! Oh! that you might all recant in time! I dread your arrival in this fiery Tophet! because it will bring additional torment to me.

"Miserable teacher that I was, I taught you to deny the operations of the Holy Ghost, and in doing so to deny the truth of God, which in fact is the same as to deny God himself. Oh! what spirit accursed can stand up under the fury of a denied God! Alas! if you do not heartily

sign your recantation in time, you must needs stand the shock, the dreadful shock of his fiery indignation to all eternity.

"Another destructive error, by which you treasure up to yourselves wrath against the day of wrath, is the trust you have in a mild, yielding law, and flexible justice of God the Judge.

"You may fancy what you will; but for my part, when I trembling stood before the awful throne, I found no condescension in, no abatements made by, the rigid law, not the least flexibility in divine justice! All was stern, all was severe, beyond all possibility of mitigation. I then found, though never before, that the council of the Most High doth stand, and that his word is as invariable as himself. O! if you had seen as much of the immutability of the law as I have, you would have done with talking as you do about abatement of its rigorous demands, or that justice doth make allowances for sins, however supposed venial. This error of yours doth directly wound both the mercy and justice of God: for if God is just, then must his law be fulfilled according to the tenor thereof; if God is merciful, his mercy must be unbounded; but if, as in effect you say, he in part forgives, and in part receives, his mercy is limited by the circumstances of the object. One man requires a greater, another requires a less degree of mercy. Is not this as great an indignity as you can offer to the mercy of God? As for me, I now see in the light of eternity, that wherever salvation comes, it comes wholly, fully, and freely, *without money and without price*, without any works of righteousness on the part of man. Likewise, I now see that God's justice is infinite; which it could not possibly be, if it could in anywise pass by the least sin unpunished. Foolish dreamers that we were! to think that God would drown his justice in the flood of his mercy, would prejudice one attribute of his incomprehensible nature, to the honour of another, and all for the sake of creatures who are less than nothing in his sight, altogether vanity. Folly in perfection indeed! That Being who is God, must be infinitely holy and just, as well as infinitely merciful. If he is infinitely holy, then he can make no allowance for sin. If infinitely just, then his mercy can be extended to none, but to the honour of his justice. But if his justice can pass

over some sins, why not all sin? and then there would be no need of a Saviour; for verily, if salvation could have come by the holiness of the creature, Christ hath died in vain. Have not you an equal right to a penny which one man may owe you, as to a pound which another man may? Such is the rigour of the law (and that soon you will find), that he who offends in one point, though it were but in a single thought, is guilty of the whole,—God will by no means clear the guilty,—there is no release from his law's arrest,—no appeal from the tribunal of his justice! O faithless and unbelieving, as I was, will you not open your eyes to see the light of instruction? Will you ever shut your ears against the voice of truth?

"I know you say, that when you come to be tried at the divine bar, that your vices must be put in one scale, and your virtues in the other; and if there happen to be an equilibrium in the balance, that God will put in so much of his divine clemency, as will make your virtues overweigh your vices.—Alas! alas! I can look back to the time that I had such a foolish notion, which greatly facilitated my ruin. But when I came to be weighed, all my deeds were accounted evil; my virtues, which I formerly thought I had a store of, were, when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, lighter than nothing, vanity itself. You will find, that unless Christ be put in the balance with you, 'you will be found wanting,' as I was. How should it be otherwise, when 'without faith it is impossible to please God,' and 'whatsoever is not of faith, is sin?' Why, then, will faithless mortals pretend to do 'that which is well pleasing in the sight of God?' When I expected my virtues to appear as my *wedding garment*, I was struck as with a thunderbolt; and when I heard the Judge, the holy God to say, 'Let his filthy rags be burned with him, both he and they are an abomination to me; from this time forward I will rejoice over him to do him evil.'

"Ah! my disciples, you will find that the first touch of the flames beneath will at once consume all your supposed virtue. The law admitteth not of composition, and the justice of God cannot be bribed with imperfect virtues,—rather the appearance of virtue. If you must stand in your own righteousness, alas! you must bear the whole weight of Jehovah's vengeance, as I do at this day. O that I had

been wise, and had understood this in time, then had not my latter end been so terribly dreadful. Ah me! these complaints are now too late!

"Another error whereby your hands are strengthened in wickedness, is your vain imaginations concerning the torments of the damned. You say that the torments of hell consist only in a separation from the joys of heaven, the blissful presence of God. If that, indeed, were all, it were no hell to souls whose natural language is,—'Depart from me, O Lord, I desire not the knowledge of thee.' All the heaven unregenerate men desire, is an utter separation from God. But I can tell you, from woeful experience, that exclusion from the mercy of God is inseparable from enduring his wrath. Separation from the joy of heaven, in eternity, is immediately connected with the most exquisite pain. Can the eloquence of angels persuade me that I feel not the most intolerable anguish! Are these flaming billows, that roll incessantly upon me, nothing but bare separation? Are these streams of vengeance, that issue continually from spouts of omnipotent wrath, nothing but separation? Doth this noisome smell, arising from the flaming sulphur, impart no torment to the damned? Do these dismal howlings of souls in unutterable agonies—these direful yellings of hideous ghosts cutting their flight through the tremendous arches of the expansive Tophet—yield no degree of torment to the damned ear? Or the sight of millions of frightful ghosts floating upon the surface of the burning lake! All the serpentine breed in their most ghastly dimensions, with all the swelling floods of Jehovah's vengeance, rolling in continually on us—can these be beheld with a peaceful eye! and all this within view of the overflowing joys of the righteous, whom on earth we accounted fanatics, enthusiasts, &c. Is all this, and infinitely more than human heart, in a state of mortality, can form any idea of, no more than a bare separation from God? Now I will reveal a mystery unto you. You say that the damned are separate from God: but verily it is a mistake! He is as fully manifested in these dreadful mansions, as he is in heaven. There he is manifested in his love, grace, mercy, truth, and holiness. Here he is manifested in his holiness, truth, justice, and wrath. If

this manifestation of God doth not create a hell of infinite torment, I know not what possibly can.

"But you say, that despair constitutes hell. I ask you, did you ever sensibly know what is meant by despair? If you felt the awful torment, caused by that gnawing worm, for the space of one minute, you would dread it as long as you lived. Know of a truth, that hell is intolerable! Flatter not yourselves, that your punishment will consist in a separation from the person whom you hate. If you are so unhappy as to persist in your heresies till the last, you will find, that one hour in this dark abode will convince you of their fallacy.

"But to make the best of a bad bargain, you have got a notion, that in some future period there shall be a general release from the torments of hell.—This is a flat denial of the oracles of God, an insult on the Author, and a crafty method of hardening sinners in their sins. When I lived on the earth, I was of the same mind with Mr. *Bourn;* but now I am in hell, and am convinced of its eternity.—Alas! my conviction adds greatly to my torment. Could we who are confined to this gloomy dungeon but once think of a release, it would in a great measure alleviate our distress. But such a thought doth not so much as once enter into our minds;—no, never will whilst eternity endures. O eternity! eternity! To think of eternity is a galling thought. Any torment is to be chosen, rather than an eternity of torment. Eternal inevitably it must be! Woe is me, I am lost; eternally lost; beyond all remedy!

"Bewitched man, to measure eternity by the divisions of time! Here we have no years, months, weeks, and days! But eternity is eternity, that is all you mortals can know of it. Insufferable insolence! thus to assault the truths of Jehovah, and give the lie to the God of eternal veracity. —Should you treat the laws of an earthly prince with equal contempt, would he calmly and patiently suffer it? Is it possible that such daring impiety can go unpunished? Surely no!

"I charge you, Mr. ——, that you write down and publish to the world all that you have heard and seen, if by that means any of my deceived followers may be persuaded to believe the truth, and escape this direful misery into

which I am plunged. Tell them, I have supplanted the truths of the Gospel.—Tell them, I sleeping, dreamed all the days of my life, and never awoke till vengeance laid hold of me. Tell them, that if I had liberty to come on earth, and there remain for one twelvemonth's space, I would openly acknowledge all mine errors and publicly recant all my heresies. Speak, speak to them, and do not spare. Tell them, that if here they arrive, their blood will be as oil in the flames of my torment, that now blaze all around me. Regard not my memory.—Let it be cut off from the earth! O that the earth were also cut off from my mind! But, alas! I have the lively images of all my past transactions intimately present with me.—The sound of my heresies for ever rings in my tormented ears. After all, remember what I told you at first: it is not love either to you or them, that makes me thus solicitously concerned for the welfare of you all, but a slavish fear that my already intolerable pains will be increased on your arrival in this bottomless abyss. Mercy and love are for ever banished from amongst us."——

As the doctor had thus spoke I beheld him surrounded by a squadron of black infernals, who cut their way swifter than the wind through the smoky arches of dreadful Tophet. They surrounded, seized, and carried him away, as I supposed, to renewed torments, by reason of his hideous shrieks, that reached up unto heaven, and even now fill my afflicted ears as I write the story. They carried him off, and I saw him no more.

Amazed I stood on this dangerous precipice, revolving in my mind what I had heard and seen, astonished to find myself so clearly convicted of infidelity; fearful lest I should share the same end with my unhappy tutor: and partly wondering that I was not indeed with him already, because I had hitherto so closely followed his doctrines. As I was meditating on these things, I heard a noise equally frightful with that which I heard at the beginning: I trembling stood expecting a second eruption, fearful lest thereby I should be overwhelmed with certain destruction. As I thus stood dreading the consequence, the noise waxed louder and louder, like many rolling thunders concentring in one. All the noise seemed to come from the bowels of the earth. Anon the earth began to tremble, at last to shake in an un-

common manner; and by and by the pit, in which I had seen such wonders, closed its lips, and ceased further to belch forth from its fiery entrails either fire, smoke, or hideous spectres. This done, the earth regained her stability, and all nature appeared serene.

Not knowing into what place of the world I was got, I judged it safest to abide where I was and wait for the wished-for morn, the welcome harbinger of day already appearing in the east.—When fair Aurora had spread her broidered skirts over all the oriental world and darted her pleasant smiles towards the west, I found by her light that I was got to the middle of the common on the south side of the town. Now knowing right-well the place on which I stood, I began with the light of the day to search for the burning forest I had seen over night; but could see nothing but what was usual on the common. I gladly would once more have viewed that pleasant but solitary avenue, through which I passed the night before; but no avenue was to be seen! I sought it, but could not find it. This made me conclude, that both the forest and avenue were only visionary.

I dreaded going home, expecting to find my wife and children buried in the ruins made by the earthquake; but to my joyful surprise, I gladly found them all in perfect health; and my wife told me, that though she slept none in the night, by reason of my absence, yet she had heard no uncommon noise, nor felt the least shock of an earthquake; making further inquiry among my neighbours, they answered in like manner: nor indeed was there to be seen about all the town the least appearance of a past earthquake: all which tended to astonish me more and more.

I knew not what to think of the vision.—Certainly, thought, I, it cannot be a dream! But I feared lest my brain was distempered, and in the midst of its distraction painted out such apparitions to me. However, two things I resolved on; 1st, Utterly to cast off all Arian and Socinian errors and embrace the orthodox faith, which I had despised the day before! but I judged it prudent candidly to examine the Doctor's books by the Scriptures of truth, before I committed them to the flames.—2d, I resolved to keep all these things which I had seen and heard, a profound secret. The regard I had for the Doctor's memory had great influence upon me.

That very day I began to take a scriptural view of the works of my unhappy tutor; and in the conclusion, found them very worthy of the fire, which accordingly, in due time they fed.

Still I was resolved to hide the vision in my heart, till one night in my sleep I dreamt, that the Doctor appeared to me in all the ghastly deformities of a damned spirit, charged me with ingratitude to that God who had in so uncommon a manner delivered me from the dangerous heresies I had imbibed from my tutor; and want of love to my fellow-creatures, in that having got the knowledge of the truth myself, I did not study to reclaim others from error.—He said, I had no true regard either for his person or memory, or I would publish unto mankind what might, in part, prevent the increase of his torments: and withal told me, if I would not resolve to publish what I had heard and seen, that he would haunt me every night in my sleep, to my unspeakable mortification.

Self-preservation hath in it a persuasive eloquence; rather than be troubled every night with the ghost of my unhappy tutor, I have prevailed with myself to obey him; though, for my pains, I expect to be called a madman by one, a fanatic by another, an enthusiast by a third, and perhaps by a fourth a malicious person. But I rest myself content, that the notable day will shew, who is the wisest disciple of reason, or the maddest enthusiast; who useth and who abuseth right reason; whether they that despise my vision, or their humble servant, whose name henceforth is ANTISOCINUS.

A

LOOKING GLASS

FOR

THE PROFESSORS OF RELIGION,

CONSISTING OF

SEVEN TRACTS ON PRACTICAL SUBJECTS:

1. A Rod for the Sluggard, or the great Evil of Idleness represented.
2. The Changes of Ephraim, or the Backslider's Warning.
3. A Caution to Drunkards, or the Sin of Intemperance censured.
4. The Canker Worm, or the Gourd of Creature Comfort withered.
5. Joshua's pious Resolution, or the Duties of Family Religion and Household Government enforced.
6. Perah-uzzah, or the Danger of Discord considered.
7. Some Thoughts on occasional Prayer.

A

ROD FOR THE SLUGGARD;

OR THE

GREAT EVIL OF IDLENESS REPRESENTED.

THE following Discourse on a branch of Christian morality, not very frequently insisted on, I shall found upon that striking and beautifully figurative passage of Solomon, in Eccl. x. 18. "By much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through."

This is given as the opinion of the wise man, after the most extensive experience, and the closest attention to moral objects. Amongst the many discoveries he made, this is one, that as on the one hand he saw, generally speaking, the hand of the diligent to make rich: on the other he found, that want cometh certainly and irresistibly upon the slothful and indolent; that, in the nature of things, and from the relation between cause and effect, "By much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through."

He evidently saw, that the bounty of our moral Governor has not, in itself, the least tendency to tie the hand of diligence, or to prevent the utmost exertion of every natural and moral power; but, on the contrary, that it is the best incentive to human industry. The Psalmist, addressing himself to his God, and taking a survey of the brutal inhabitants of this world, useth these remarkable words, Psal. civ. 27. 28. "These all wait upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather; thou openest thine hand, and they are filled with good." These words most beautifully display the law, which the whole system of being is under to the Almighty Creator, whose bounty is the only efficient of their subsistence; the obligation all are under to gather * the

* To gather—The word *gather* is here chosen rather than *collect*, in allusion to the passage above quoted from the sweet Singer of Israel.

blessings of his bounty, in the use of appointed means. And although spoken primarily, with reference to the brutal ranks, it cannot but be very proper to apply them to reasonable men; as it would be absurd to suppose that the all-wise Creator, by an invariable stated law, should have subjected unthinking animals to diligence, in gathering the blessings of his providence, and have left his vicegerent man, whom he hath ennobled with his own image, and adorned with thinking powers, unsubjected to any such obligation. In the days of Israel's peregrinations in the wilderness, their God was indeed pleased graciously to depart from the usual rules of his providence, and by a miracle to feed them for forty years; yet still so, as that his blessings should be sought with industry, and that they should gather with their own hands, the provision made for their sustenance. The manna fell indeed in all the camp, but not within any of their tents; and, although it fell even by the tent doors, it dropt into none of their mouths. He gave them manna in the greatest abundance, but they must gather it, ere they could feed; every man must seek his own provision, every man his Omer. None could live upon the industry of his neighbour; so that if any neglected to gather, he must even fast it out, till the next return of the corn of heaven, Psal. lxxviii. 24. From hence we are taught, that plenty of means has, in itself, no tendency to promote their neglect or disuse. God gives many precious blessings to his people, in the use of means; but all his gifts must be sought for in the ordinances of his house, where his blessed provisions are given to the hungry; and he fares the best who is most diligent in his own special appointments, for he filleth their mouths with his goodness. Strange as it may seem, there really is such a thing as being glutted with a plenty of the means, and a perverting the designs of grace, by taking occasion, from the richness of the Redeemer's bounty, to indulge ourselves unto slothfulness and neglect; till our appetite for spiritual things is so far gone, as to loathe even the honey-comb itself; and because we have means so exceedingly plenty, we profit them little or nothing. Our gracious Provider giveth his good things only to the hungry; the dull, the heavy, and fat soul is usually sent empty away.

How beautiful is it to see, on the one hand, the bounty

of our God poured down about our camp in plentiful showers; and, on the other hand, to see the munificence of heaven serving to quicken the zeal, and to promote the activity of its dependants, so that they are up with early diligence, and holy industry, to gather the bounties of their God. But what an unlovely scene does slothfulness present, and how truly contemptible does it render its subjects? Ask the wise man, for he can tell you: Prov. xxiv. 30, 31. "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down." What a landscape is here? How awfully picturesque are the consequences of slothfulness? And how disagreeable, yea, how shocking is the dwelling of the sluggard? The slothful man, and the man void of understanding, are both but one person; an idle hand being a certain symptom of a vain and foolish heart. Wisdom is like faith, it can only be known by it fruits; and slothfulness being no evidence either of wisdom or faith, the holy Scripture sets down the idle, slothful person for both a fool and an infidel. His vineyard and fields are eye-sores to the public, and nuisances to the commonwealth. His farm is a thorny wilderness, rather than a fruitful field, and his vineyard more fit for an habitation of dragons, than likely to yield delight to the rational beholder. Such is the case of that professor, who is careless in the use of the means of grace. His soul is uncultivated like the sluggard's garden; whilst he sleeps in security, the nettles and thorns spring up with luxuriance. His heart is more like a den of dragons, a cage of filthy birds, or a pit where serpents are fostered, than the throne of the holy immaculate Redeemer; and his conduct is an evident slight upon the bounties of sovereign grace, instead of manifesting a desire after the enjoyment of its Author. I may add, that not unlike to the vineyard of the slothful, is that church where discipline is neglected; discipline is as the stone wall of the vineyard, which, when broken down, the wild bear of the forest, foxes both great and small, may enter in, to devour and tread under foot. As in other cases, it is here, "the hand of the diligent maketh rich," Prov. x. 14. Diligence secureth the house, ennobles and beautifies the landscape.

To come now to a more particular illustration of the subject, I shall consider this slothfulness or idleness of the hands, as it may refer to the things of this life.—To Christians in a collective capacity,—and to individual professors of religion, as they use, or disuse, the appointed means of grace.

I. Sloth, or idleness of hands, is common enough, even as it respects the things of this present life, notwithstanding its absurdity, and its unwarrantableness by all laws, divine and human. In the nature of things, the end is not to be expected, without the use of the means. If you would go to France, you must cross the waters; if you would live comfortably, you must act diligently; or if you would dwell in safety, you must stand upon your guard. The voice of the law is, "He that will not work let him not eat;" 2 Thess. iii. 10. yet, in defiance of divine authority, some are so sottishly stupid, and void of understanding, that they expect the end, without the means, and to eat whether they work or not. But these sluggards are the pest of society; the burden of the church; and their own destroyers.

First, They are the pests of society; as from the baneful source of idleness do spring almost all disorders, which disturb the peace, and endanger the property of individuals. Sinners arrived at the very zenith of villany, capable of perpetrating deeds the most daring and horrid, are usually found to have begun their course of iniquity in an aversion to business, or idleness of the hands. Who are capable of raising tumults, and committing riots, but idle profligates, the avowed enemies to honest industry? To what purpose are watchmen appointed to patrol the streets, in the silent hours of general repose, but to protect the industrious against the rapine and violence of the slothful vagabond? When you travel by the way, or are late abroad on the evening, you apprehend no evil at the hand of the diligent labourer, how indigent soever; but you dread an encounter with the idle villain, whose aversion to honest labour leads him, like the wild beasts of the forest, to prey upon his neighbours. They that are conversant in criminal courts, must necessarily form the most terrible ideas of an idle course of life, and see the necessity for parents and masters, not only keeping their children, and apprentices, constantly employed, but by all possible means restraining

them, from the company of those who discover an aversion to business or learning. As an aversion to learning in infancy, is usually followed by such an aversion to busines in youth and manhood, from which the most dreadful consequences may be naturally apprehended.

I would advise every young one, who may happen to read this little Tract, to avoid the company of all youth, who are often detected in a neglect of their proper business, with as much care, as you would avoid the hole of an adder. For those who mind not their proper business, must be worse employed; and hence it is, that none are addicted to idleness, but such as are wickedly given. Therefore they are sure to be injurious to all those who desire to live with honour in the world, procuring for themselves things honest in the sight of all men. But if you see a child diligent in his pursuit of learning whilst at school, or a youth that is faithful and industrious in his master's service, cultivate an acquaintance with him, for honour shall certainly be his attendant, and he shall be a blessing to society, for "a man diligent in his business shall not be amongst mean men, but shall stand before kings;" Prov. xxii. 29. whilst the slothful and idle shall be clothed with rags, and pinched with penury and famine.

Secondly, The idle or slothful person is not only the pest of society in general, but should he, by any means, gain admittance into a Gospel church, he becomes a burden or dead weight upon it, and as such ought by no means to be tolerated, much less relieved. In the nature of things, the community can receive no manner of assistance from him, either in things spiritual or temporal. In regard to temporal things, he is clothed with rags; involved in want merely through the idleness of his hands, so that he can lend no manner of assistance, however heavy their burdens may fall upon them. And were he even possessed of spiritual gifts, they may not communicate with him therein, as he is a disorderly person; a stain to the Gospel profession; and a scandal to that church unhappily burdened with his indolence.

Suppose, for instance, that a professor of this cast stands in the relation of a servant to a master who is no professor; what is likely to be his reasoning in such a case, concerning the church with whom the sluggard is connected? I can

give you a specimen of what I myself have heard, and what I deem very injurious to the reputation of any religious society whatever. Says Mundano to me one day, "I don't love these religious servants, who pretend to more sanctity than their neighbours, and yet, at the same time, are more unprofitable members of society, than many who make no profession of religion at all. There is *Indolus*, my man, a fellow who might be very useful if he would, but who is so idle and careless, that there is no bearing with him. He is honest, I believe, so that I can trust him; but there is no getting him up in any reasonable time in the morning; and if he is sent upon business through the day, one knows not when he will return; and my business at home is frequently neglected, for the sake of some frivolous matter or other. So that I believe I must and shall part with him. And yet this fellow is a member of ——s church, and one that thinks himself better by ever so much than others, who do their duty. Surely common honesty must be one of the first lessons taught by Christianity; for that religion must be detestable which makes people worse masters, or servants, than they would have been without it. I know not what to think of that society, they must be a strange kind of people, who admit such a fellow as him amongst them. But I suppose they are all alike."

By means of slothfulness in a member the church is slandered and hurt, the infidel is prejudiced against religion, and the bands of sin are made stronger; but this is not all. Idle persons are disorderly, and apt to be busybodies, and meddlers in other people's affairs. Those who are given to industry have so much of their own to attend, that they have no time to lose in considering the state of other people's affairs, without an absolute necessity. But the slothful person having nothing to do, can give himself entirely to study the concerns of others. He hath time to go about, from house to house, gossiping and sowing the seeds of division and contention. None so likely to commence tale-bearer, tattler, and busybody, as the slothful and indolent; therefore none so likely to become disturbers of the peace of the community. Some have been of this stamp, who, if we may judge by appearances, seem to have crept into Gospel churches, merely with a view to have their sloth supported; but they ought to know that

a church cannot support an idle person, if capable of working, but in defiance of the word of God, which expressly charges, "That he who will not work shall not eat," 2 Thess. iii. 10.

Thirdly, The idle and slothful are not only the *pests of society*, and the *burden of churches*, but they also are their own destroyers; for instance, the sluggard leads an uncomfortable and disagreeable life: even admitting he is restrained from the enormities already mentioned. "His way is like a thorn hedge," Prov. xv. 19. He meets with nothing but difficulties. There is a lion in every way, and a serpent suspected to be in every path. A mole hill to him is a mountain, and a windlestraw like a tall cedar in Lebanon. His desires are as strong, perhaps stronger than those of others; but alas! his industry being so very far inferior to his wants, he may well be said to desire, and not have wherewithal to gratify the ardent passion; and therefore it is, that the wise man saith, "the desire of the slothful killeth him," Prov. xxi. 25. That is, through the intenseness of the desire, and the chagrin of disappointment, melancholy is bred, which preys upon the vitals, and at last stops up the springs of life themselves. He will not plough in spring, and how should he reap in harvest? He disregards the industry of the ant in the summer, and therefore cannot have recourse to her well-stored granaries in winter. Nor is he likely to fare in any wise equal to those, whose industry has recommended them to the esteem of society, when he is naturally overtaken with apparent circumstances of distress. The slothful person makes all men his enemies; and he that looks to others for assistance whilst he has a capacity to provide for himself, but neglects the means of so doing, shall find that he is utterly deserted, when in reality his necessity comes upon him. For Want *shall* come upon him as a man in full armour, who cannot be resisted; then what languishing desire is he exposed to; and how servilely must he cringe, to obtain a morsel of bread for sustenance, in the time of his necessity.

II. The words which are the foundation of this discourse, "By much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through," may be applied to the members of a Gospel church, in a collective capacity, called to be workers together with and for God.

In which capacity, diligence and industry are indispensably necessary, in order to keep the building in proper repair.

Christ Jesus our common Lord, hath furnished his church with the most profitable and salutary rules, which, notwithstanding their ease and excellence, are frequently neglected; the building falls into an apparent decay, and retains little likeness to the pattern exhibited by revelation. And this is sometimes the case where the parties are, in some measure, sensible of the disorder, and wish it was otherwise. But it ought to be observed, that if my house has its tiles stripped off by the wind, my being sorry for it, and wishing it repaired, will not prevent the rain from dropping through. The workmen must be employed, and the tiles replaced, in order to render my dwelling comfortable. Just so it is with the church when disorders take place. Lamenting it, and talking of it from place to place, and wishing it was otherwise, will not be effectual to heal the disorder. There must be a vigorous exertion of church authority; discipline must be executed according to the unmixed dictates of holy Scripture, and that without delay. Therefore care ought to be taken, that church business be not committed to improper persons, as expedition in this case is as necessary as discretion. Were any part of church business committed to one who should act like the sluggard in it, without heart and activity, making no point of conscience at all of dispatch, he would verify Solomon's words, "As sour grapes to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him," Prov. x. 26.; and his neglect of business may be attended with consequences which he never apprehended. For as sour grapes set the teeth on edge, and unfit them for mastication, neglect of business in one department will stop the whole proceeding. Nor shall the evil stop here; for such conduct is like smoke to the eyes, which injures the sight; and it is possible that such neglect may, from mere respect to the brother so neglecting, cause a church to lose sight of the original object, and so faulter in respect of duty. Now as every brother in a Gospel church, formed upon an independent or scriptural plan, is called to act for the general good, it behoves every individual to call himself to account, and inquire what part of church business lies or stops with him;

perhaps this might have a happy tendency to promote dispatch.

A Gospel church is a little commonwealth, in which public good is, or ought to be, *with every one the leading object;* and where living merely to one's self, or seeking our own, is held to be detestable or unchristian. Yet after all, it is possible that even in such a church, there may be found some who mean no more by Christian fellowship, than meeting publicly together to partake of the word and ordinances: but such people evidently betray an inattention to the Scriptures, as well as ignorance of the spirit and genius of society in general. Every member of society is interested in the most interior part of its communion; and therefore every member is by natural, as well as scriptural obligations, as much bound to attend private church meetings, as he is to attend the most public appointments of the church.

It is even possible, in a Christian society, to find some who may be active and diligent providers for their own houses, tender and loving husbands, industrious and kind parents, faithful and benevolent masters, who at the same time are mere sluggards in the matters of Christ's kingdom. These act consistently as men, but inconsistently as Christians, and servants to the King of kings. Now, as all effects whatever proceed from certain causes, it may not be amiss, under this head, first to inquire into the causes why active men, respecting worldly things, are sometimes slothful in performing the work of God's sanctuary; then secondly, to shew that the whole of this is mistaken conduct.

I. Men of activity, in providing for their own houses, are sometimes very slothful in the business of Christ's kingdom; at least dilatory in pursuing the interest of that church in particular with which they stand connected; which slothfulness may arise from all, and certainly does from one of the following causes, *self-love—mistrust—covetousness—an undue regard to the conduct of others.*

First, Self-love will give the preference to our own affairs, and lead to a neglect of the Redeemer's church, and its concerns, as seemingly to us of less importance. Hence the following reasoning arises: church business to be sure ought to be attended to by somebody; things are not so well as might be wished. But what can I do? I have so

many burdens of my own. I must look to my own houses and lands, and improve the talents entrusted with me. I must take care of my wife, my children, and other near relations, that have a dependance on me. And hence if you thus address some individuals, "Well, Christ is to be worshipped to-day;" you will have for answer, I cannot attend; for I have a customer to meet at such a place; a sale or some other urgent business in hand, therefore I pray thee have me excused. "The church has business which must be done to-night;" but I have affairs of very great importance of my own to attend to, which, if neglected, may be of bad consequences; they can do well enough without me; what can be expected from one that has so many cares of his own upon him, wherefore I pray thee have me excused.* In this case it is very easy to see to whom the preference is given, to self or the blessed Jesus; so that without any difficulty it will be seen, that self is the great Antichrist to be guarded against, and that all self-love is antichristianism. Let you and me beware of pluming ourselves with the honours due to the head of the church, and of appropriating to private purposes the time and talents bestowed for public good. It is not enough to avoid being a burden to a church, and giving no uneasiness, but all are called to study usefulness. The servant with one talent was not cast out for embezzling his lord's money, for he kept it very carefully tied in a napkin, and for greater security hid it in the earth; but he was rejected for not improving the talent with which he was entrusted. To be satisfied therefore with being able to say, "I never was troublesome to the church," is foolish and absurd: thou hast been a robber of Christ, and his church too, if thine own affairs in the family have superseded thy care, industriously to promote the good of his interest.

Secondly, Another cause of this slothfulness in the things of God, and the great concerns of his house, is mistrust in the divine Providence, as if the Lord could not, or would not take care of your business, whilst you are conscientiously giving your attendance to the duties of your station in his sanctuary. Ziklag, David's residence, was indeed

* This is not intended to censure an occasional absence, from something happening of more than ordinary importance; but such a heartless indifference, as makes church affairs seem to be of little moment in the eye of some professors.

spoiled by the enemy, in the absence of him and his men; but then they were not absent from their houses upon the concerns of God's house, but had joined themselves to Achish, the enemy of Israel: so that the sacking of Ziklag, and the capture of his wives, may rather be considered as a just rebuke, than a neglect of holy providence. But it was far otherwise with the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, whose inheritance lay beyond Jordan, adjoining to the countries of enemies; they left their lands defenceless, when all their males went annually up to Shiloh to worship; yet did not their enemies invade their lands, for God was the guardian of their wives and little ones; so that their country never enjoyed more profound peace, than when its strength was withdrawn, on account of their being required to appear before him annually. You who are masters and mistresses expect no more of your servants, than that they should do your business. It is their part to perform it faithfully, and it is yours to provide for them necessary food, and the appointed reward whilst they are about it. We are all servants to God our Saviour, who challengeth the honour due to him. "If I be a master where is my fear?" Mal. i. 6. Ought not we then to allow him the honour of a master, by seeing faithfully and diligently to the business of his house; and whilst so doing, leaving it to him to take care of our food, raiment, and all necessary concerns? But it argues a great deal of infidelity, when we dare not leave the disposal of our temporal affairs to him whose work we are called to attend.

Thirdly, Another ground of this slothfulness, in respect to the house of God, is covetousness; that sordid, mean, and base disposition, so unbecoming a child of God, and heir of immortal glory. It is not indeed an easy matter to persuade any man that he is a covetous person; and self-adulation hath still made it more difficult, having devised feigned names, such as frugality and industry, by which it is usually called. But I think that, with great safety, we may call by that sordid name, all desire of getting more of the world, than is consistent with our duty in the house of God. I have well weighed this rule, and cannot see the least impropriety in it; and if it is admitted as valid, it will follow that very many of the members of Gospel

churches must be ranked along with this grovelling class of men, who also class with idolaters and worshippers of Mammon. Besides, this vile principle tacitly brings the charge of injustice against the moral government of God, in requiring of us more than is really consistent with our well-being as Christians. Beware, therefore, how you neglect the duties of God's house for the sake of your own temporal emolument, seeing every such neglect is, in itself, a charge against God, your Saviour and Lawgiver, as gathering where he hath not strawed, and reaping where he hath not sown. And remember this, that if God was to roll into your possession all the riches of the East, they would not add the least degree of comfort and pleasure to you in your dying moments. Nothing then will give you satisfaction, but the presence of that God whose service you are now called to pursue. And is it not preposterous for people contrary to the dictates of their own enlightened minds, to make so much ado about what will yield neither pleasure nor profit on a dying day? Once more;

Fourthly, Another spring of this neglect of duty, or slothfulness respecting the affairs of the house of God, is a mistaken regard to the conduct of others, making that, instead of God's word, the rule by which our religious behaviour is governed. At first view, one would indeed think, that people who have faith in their hearts, and the Bible in their hands; people who profess to have submitted to Jesus as the only lawgiver to his church, could not be guilty of a conduct so dishonouring to the Saviour, and so preposterous in itself, as to be at all influenced by the example of others, whether churches or individuals, so as to make it any part of our rule. Yet even from the beginning it was so, as we find in the case of Peter, whose disingenuous behaviour at Antioch drew Barnabas into dissimulation along with him. It still has its influence, not only over individuals, but over the spirit and conduct of some churches, whose profession gave room to have hoped for a more consistent and uniform regard to the Redeemer's sacred authority.

Two classes of people are in a special manner liable to be affected by the examples of others. The *slothful* and the *fearful*.

First, The *slothful*, in what capacity soever, will be apt

to rest satisfied, that in his religious conversation he is not far behind his neighbours. Tell him, "You was not with us on the last occasion:" you have his answer, "I was not; but there was brother *such a one*, he was not there neither." Tell him, "I seldom see you at church meeting, I should be glad, my brother, to see you oftener among us." His answer is ready again: "I come as often as I can; I believe I am full as often there as brother *such a one*, or brother *such a one;* if all would come as often as I do, we should be more full than we frequently are." Now this may all be true; but how true soever, what is it to the purpose? What is the conduct of others to thee? Surely it is no part of thy rule. The whole matter lies finally between God and thy own soul. The behaviour of every member of a Gospel community, is or ought to be independent of all influence, besides that of Christ's authority in the Scriptures of truth; and thy only rule, O believer, is what the Lord thy God requires of thee, and not what brother such a one does, or leaves undone.

Again, the slothful are very apt to pay an undue regard to the state and order of other churches of the same persuasion; such a man is more apt to compare the community to which he belongs with them, than with the apostolic church, our only pattern; and to rest satisfied with being able to say, our church falls little short of any of our sister churches, either in faith or order, though it comes not up to the purity of the primitive church. But why are churches called independent, but from their professed regard to the Scriptures, exclusive of any other influence whatever, as their only rule both of faith and discipline, consistent with the true spirit and genius of the Gospel? Churches in any sense under the influence of others, or mutually influencing one another, may, indeed, if they choose it, call themselves independents; but in truth they have no more of independency than the empty, and (with them) unmeaning name. But what is it to one church how another is managed? That we are upon a level with others in point of regularity, is no manner of proof that we are right, unless we have the conviction in our own hearts, that we for ourselves, as a church, do really go forth by the footsteps of the flock, and walk in the good old way to be discovered nowhere but in the volume of Revelation. In point of

faith we will be satisfied for ourselves, and will receive nothing but upon rational evidence; and is there not equal reason for us to satisfy ourselves, from God's unerring word, what is the discipline instituted by the Redeemer? To talk of things being left to discretion, in reference to church discipline, as some have done, is an *impious slander* upon the Bible, representing it as a rule inadequate to the purposes of practical religion. Why should we be satisfied with ranking with others here, when we would not choose to risk our state with a being classed with any set of men hereafter, without knowing of a truth, that their faith and practice are actually built upon the prophets and apostles, Christ himself being the chief corner stone? In a word, every individual, and every church, is called to act in all things as the Bible directs; to the law, therefore, and to the testimony, for whosoever walks not according to this rule, it is because there is no light in them.

Secondly, Another class of people, whose conduct is absolutely limited by that of others, is the *fearful;* who are so extremely prudent, delicate, and modest, that they dare not be too zealous in their attachment to the simplicity of the Scriptures, either in faith or practice, for fear of giving offence to others, especially to those who love to have the pre-eminence. It is not the practical opinion of all who have places in Gospel churches, that it is better to obey God than man; and hence light is stifled, and the powers of the mind become slaves to the passions and prejudices of others, instead of being subject to Christ's authority in the Scriptures. But how preposterous, unchristian, and unmanly is this mistaken conduct! If other men are really lovers of your Redeemer, your zeal for his honour, your firm attachment to Bible authority, and your study to maintain consciences void of offence before God, as well as before man, will not, cannot be offensive to them; and if they are such who love to have the pre-eminence, and want, at all events, to establish their own authority, they are to be disregarded, as enemies to the Gospel of Christ. But remember, that when your study to avoid giving offence to man brings guilt upon your consciences before a heart-searching God, you act in a manner very unbecoming the name and character of a Christian. As the fear of man never fails to bring a snare, it ought to be

guarded against; and the followers of Christ should study to be as much in interest in his service, as worldlings of every kind are in making provision for the flesh, to gratify the worse than brutal desires of sensual affection; remembering always that one is our Master, even Jesus, who was crucified for us and rose again; and that all fear which restrains from the exercise of duty is sinful in its nature, and ought to be guarded against, as we would wish to avoid the upbraidings of a guilty conscience.

Having traced this slothfulness in the way and work of God to its proper springs, I shall now,

II. Shew that it is utterly wrong, and injurious to our own houses, as well as to the house of God, which is his church and people.

1. It is so far from gaining the approbation of the blessed Governor, that it really subjects unto his sharp rebuke, as is clear from the case of the two sisters of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, whose spirit and conduct were very different, and whose treatment by their heavenly guest was in all respects as different, and properly adapted to their several dispositions.

If immoderate care could at all be justified, Martha had not been reproved; for she had as much to plead in her own excuse, as can be pretended to by any of her kinsfolks, who imitate the anxiety of her spirit, and stand aloof from the feet of their Saviour. She was not *mistress* of the house, but *housekeeper to her brother Lazarus*, and therefore her conduct was subject to his inspection. She had a great entertainment to provide, which required much solicitude and industry, especially as the Son of God, the Lord of heaven and earth, was the principal among her company, for whom the feast was providing. She had a sister so taken up with religion, that, whatever was to be done in the house, she minded nothing but hearing of Christ's sermons, and sitting at his feet when in company. No doubt it was very provoking to careful busy Martha, to see her sister so inattentive to household affairs, when she herself was in such a pother. She thought that Mary might have come of her own accord, and said, "Sister, shall I assist you?" But Mary continued as thoughtless as if there had been no bustle in the family. Wherefore she could bear it no longer, but resolved to give her the hear-

ing of it, and that, to mortify her the more, before all the company. Well, she comes, and lays her appeal before Jesus, and wanted him to side with her in reproving her neglectful sister. "Lord, dost not thou care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me," Luke x. 40. As if she had said, "It is not so strange that my sister should leave me in this hurry of business to serve alone; for that is common with her, she minds nothing but running after preaching, whatever is to be done at home; but I wonder that Jesus should countenance her in her carelessness: thou, Lord, teachest the ways of God in truth; wilt thou not convince my sister of her mistaken conduct, and stir her up to diligence in her domestic station. It must be right, therefore bid her at once that she come to my assistance." Such was her appeal; but what answer does she receive? Why, a very mortifying one; a severe reproof. "Martha, Martha, thou art cumbered about many things, but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken from her."—q. d. "Martha, Martha, thou art so full of perplexing care thyself, that it blinds thee to thy true privilege; thou canst not be easy without lugging in both heaven and earth to join in thine anxieties. Wouldest thou have me, Martha, who am come from heaven for thy redemption, to join thee in the low and pitiful cares which pain thy bosom, and check that conduct, which of all others is the most acceptable to me. Mary's tears bedewing my feet, and her attentive regard to my doctrine, is by far more pleasing to me, than the sumptuous feast which thou art providing, Martha. I therefore justify thy sister's conduct, and highly approve the choice she has made, and will encourage and protect her in its enjoyment." Thus it is manifest, that worldly care, which is protractive of spiritual duty, shall never obtain the divine approbation.

2. If he that forsakes all shall have a hundred fold in this life, besides eternal life in the world to come; and if he that will lose his life, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, shall save it, it is easy and natural to shew, that the best way to secure your property from the ravages of villany, and your families from want and penury, is to be careful and diligent in the affairs of God's tabernacle. If his church lies warm upon your affections, and his glory in his house is the

object of your main concern, he will, in faithfulness, take care of you and your affairs. You may, indeed, for the present, seem to be losers by your attention to church concerns; but it will be more than abundantly made up to you, by providentially guarding you against the machinations of villany, by which you might otherwise have your circumstances ruined, or by leading you into such connexions, or into such a chain of events, as shall be greatly to your advantage. Nothing can be more certain than that, if you are conscientious in the discharge of your duty in the church of God, aiming singly at the Redeemer's honour, as the first concern of your lives, and leading aim in the bent of your conduct, he will build you houses as he did the Egyptian midwives, who hazarded the king's displeasure rather than destroy the hope of Israel. All your striving to get riches, or indeed to keep what you have gotten, will be absolutely in vain, if God does not do both for you: the Lord must both build and watch, or builder and watchman labour in vain. Divine providence alone maketh rich and maketh poor; and who are most likely to be its favoured objects? he that serveth God, or he that serveth himself? Jesus will determine in these remarkable words, "If any man serve me, him will my Father honour." He that serveth Jesus, by making his honour in his church the first object of his pursuit, he will honour in his providence in this life, as well as with a crown of glory in the life which is to come. And I think the proper negative of this is, that he that honoureth not Jesus the Son, shall not be honoured of the Father. If you are careful for God's glory, you may make yourselves very easy about the rest: God will take your temporal affairs upon himself, and you shall profit exceedingly. You shall not have it to say, that your Redeemer is a hard and austere Master; a tyrant as well as a sovereign. None ever yet lost by the service of God, nor by it shall any ever be loser.

Remember what choice young Solomon made, and what he got by his wisdom. Just on his accession to the throne of Israel, God appeared to him in a vision of the night, left it to him to ask one of three things, and freely to take his choice. Having such an extensive prospect opened before him, a giddy thoughtless youth would have asked mountains of boundless wealth, the dazzling splendour of

princely honours, the empire of the world, or twice the days of the oldest of men. But Solomon, divinely led, considered properly his personal situation, as the head of the hosts of God, and governor of all the tribes of Israel; willing to govern, not as a tyrant who seeks his own, but as a vicegerent to the Almighty for the public good. He fixes his heart upon wisdom, to enable him to rule for God, according to, and the ends for which he was raised up, and thus expresseth his choice. "Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this thy so great people?" He confines his choice entirely to wisdom, and that to one species of wisdom only; wisdom for the government of God's inheritance. But lo! he obtains all things else without asking for them; wisdom of every kind, natural, moral, and spiritual, were granted to him; riches and honour more than ever fell to the lot of any other potentate whatever. So shall it be with those of you who choose wisdom and spiritual prudence, to make you useful in the house of God he will take care of your houses as he did of Solomon's.

But if self must prevail, and your own concerns must have the ascendency over those of the church, he will smite your houses in the four corners, there shall be a moth in every bag; a worm at the root of every pleasant gourd, and desolation shall be the lot of your inheritance. He will send villains to defraud you; he will bewilder you in your commercial affairs, that you shall choose the evil and leave the good, and speedily bring destruction upon your comforts. Unless, indeed, thou art a very muckworm, and hast no portion in the future life; in this case he may treat thee as a bastard, and let thee have thy portion continued to the end of thy days. But if you are born from above, he will bring you by one means or another to prefer the concerns of his house to every private affair of your own. This, if I mistake not, is the reason why some professors are visited with so many stripping providences, because they would not trust the great Governor with them, and gave their own affairs the preference unto those of his church and people.

III. The words are capable of a farther improvement still, and may be applied to the work of grace carried on in individuals by the Holy Ghost, in the use of instituted

means. And in this sense, as well as the former, it may be truly said, that "By much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through." It might indeed be naturally expected, that those who have tasted the sweetness of divine love shed abroad in their hearts, who have a heaven of happiness and glory in view, would be diligent in the use of every means, for the cherishing of that sweet delight, which, at certain seasons, they have had in the enjoyment of God, as their chiefest good. That those who, having experienced the severe conflicts attending the first awakenings of the soul, triumphed over all the clamours of a guilty conscience, by having attained the peace of God which passeth all understanding, to keep their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus, should afterwards return to the neglect of those very means in which they obtained these benefits so munificent, may seem astonishing. Yet it is even true, that Ephraim, although taught by the Almighty to go, may become like a silly dove, without heart to the means of grace, and, in a way of backsliding, set his face towards Egypt and Assyria. Believers may fall from their first love, and become neither cold nor hot; may be almost as if they had never seen nor approved of the Lord Jesus. But ah! what a wilderness situation is such a soul in? How dreadful and deplorable!

It cannot be unseasonable to shew by what means and degrees degeneracy advances, and destroys the liveliness and comforts of the soul; and most usually it is in some such a manner as the following. First, worldly cares prevail over our spiritual concerns, so that one or other of the instituted means comes to be neglected, perhaps reading the word, which, although not totally omitted when cares become prevalent, meets but with a cursory reading without due attention. The neglect of one duty usually leads to that of another, and from an estrangement from private duties, grows a neglect of those of public worship; and that person who can live without his Bible through the week, could also, but for decency or shame, do without the ministry of the word on the ensuing sabbath. Hence a small matter will prevent coming out on Lord's day morning, and a little time will make it so habitual, that you can lose the morning part of every Lord's day, without much upbraid-

ings of conscience. When it comes to this, you will not stop here, but you will venture upon an afternoon now and then, which may at first be attended with many remonstrances of conscience against your slothfulness; but you will have an expedient at hand, you can read your Bible or some other good book during service time, which may, if grace prevent not, entirely silence your clamorous hearts; especially, if Satan is permitted to give you comfort in the neglect of means. I say Satan, for I believe not that God gives comfort to his people but in the use of appointed means; whilst they are easily to be had. To talk of being comforted in the wilful neglect of ordinances, is mere delusion, and not to be regarded, seeing God hath declared, that he delighteth more in the gates of Zion, than in all the dwellings of Jacob. The plain sense of which is, God delighteth more in the public worship of his name, in the assemblies of his people, than in family worship, however seasonably and devoutly performed. Therefore when pretended personal devotion supersedes the use of his public ordinances, it is not to be supposed that it can be acceptable to him, and therefore it cannot be truly comfortable to the party.

Farther, when you have habituated yourselves, for a certain time, to a neglect of public worship, and your place has been empty from time to time in the church, a shyness will come upon your spirit, that you will not much care to have any intercourse with your brethren, for fear they should reprove your slothfulness. The next thing naturally consequent upon this is shame; shame will drive you away altogether, and it is much if the evil of your backsliding will be confined to yourselves. You cannot readily confess yourselves in the fault, much less to be wilful backsliders, therefore your invention will work for some excuse or other, as a refuge for your credit. Something in the minister, or the ministry, or some misconduct of the church towards one or other of its members, in all probability will be alleged as an excuse for your neglect. Imperfection will here furnish but too plausible a pretence for you, seeing your minister is a man of like passions with yourselves, and therefore every part of his spirit and conduct may not be able to stand the strictest inquiry. As to his ministry, he sees but in part, and therefore he can pro-

phesy only in part; though he may have much knowledge, he is also possessed of much ignorance, and therefore it may rationally be concluded, that every sentence delivered by him cannot bear the strict scrutiny of those who are determined to criticise and find fault. The church also is under the same predicament as a society of imperfect men; so that, however regular and well designed their views may be, imperfections, yea errors, will sometimes be visible in their proceedings, and of course it is no difficult matter for a backslider, when he determines on it, to find a subterfuge in the imperfections of others. But what a deplorable situation is that unhappy person in, who can stoop to such mean and dishonourable shifts. He puts me in mind of Adam, who, to excuse his own disobedience, became the accuser of his bosom companion, confessedly bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh.

Farther still; since I have been conversant with professors, I have known some who, through the whole week, were wont to have health sufficient to enable them to attend to their worldly business, but most commonly indisposed on the Lord's day, so as to detain them at home. Just as if they had been under some periodical disease, the paroxysm of which was weekly, and always fixed its return on the sabbath day. Such diseases being unknown to physicians, one would be tempted to think, that in such cases the indisposition was feigned, and if so, it doubly aggravates their guilt, and makes the neglect of God's ordinances abundantly more dreadful. However, it is a maxim with me, from which I cannot depart, that, in ordinary cases, the same degree of health which will enable a person to go about his business through the week, if continued, will be sufficient to bring him to the church of God on his holy day, to join in his instituted worship.

We ought to look well to the beginnings of backsliding, for if it is indulged it is unknown where it may end. It is like the breaking in of water, which though it begins only in drops, may, if not prevented, end in an inundation, that shall sweep away all before it, as has been the case with many.

Now to conclude, I shall beg leave to address my readers as members of civil society, and request each, well to consider his conduct in that connexion in which he stands;

being fully persuaded, that an upright conscientious discharge of duty in civil and domestic life, is indispensably necessary to our supporting the honourable character of Christians, or followers of Jesus. And,

I. I would address myself to you, who are servants or apprentices, from whom the word of God challenges, not only obedience to your masters, but all diligence and industrious dispatch of their temporal business. And indeed it is morally impossible, that a slothful and untrusty servant can be a fervent Christian, and an honourable church member. It has been suspected, that many who stand in the relation of servants, have been so far from acting towards their masters as servants of God, to whom they were accountable, that their main, if not their only design, seemed to be, to serve themselves of their masters and mistresses. Where this is the case, it is impossible that the fear of God can be before the eyes of the parties, and that they study to maintain consciences void of offence, both towards God, and towards man. Impossible, therefore, that a person of that conduct can be a faithful servant of the living God, seeing he is not so much as faithful to his engagements with man. It is not enough that a servant is honest, and may be trusted with his master's substance, if he is not also diligent in dispatch of his business. Servants are apt to form high expectations from believing masters, as if in their service they should enjoy uncommon privileges; and they are frequently mortified by disappointment, for want of duly considering, that believing masters have business to be done, or they would not be under the necessity of at all keeping servants; and that their disappointment as frequently arises from their own negligence, as from any default on the part of their masters. Every servant ought to consider, that whilst he is under his master's roof, his time and talents are his master's property by mutual agreement. I am aware that an objection will here be made, and it will be asked, What, must a servant then have no time that he can call his own, and which he may apply to religious purposes? To which I answer;

First, A conscientious discharge of duty towards your master makes all the time your own; for whilst you are faithfully serving him, you are obeying and maintaining consciences void of offence before God, your heavenly

Father; which great privilege you lose when slothful in your master's business. There is a serving God in your generation work, as well as in the assemblies of his people; and a part of service too, incumbent on every human being.

Secondly, By a diligent attention to your master's business, you put it into his power to indulge you in every wished for privilege; as his affairs suffer no loss by your devotion to Christ in his ordinances; and a man must be his own enemy who would deny a faithful diligent servant any reasonable privileges, as such a one must be a blessing to his family, and to all his affairs; to his store and to his basket. But if a servant is slothful, and neglects his daily concerns, he puts it absolutely out of his master's power to give those indulgences, as in the case abovementioned. His business, which obliges him to keep servants, must be done; and therefore if neglected through the day, it must be dispatched at night; and so it falls out, that the slothful servant can have no time to himself, either for religious or other purposes. I am afraid it will be found, that the confinement of many servants ariseth from their own slothfulness, rather than the avarice of their masters. Although I am far from denying, that this avarice may sometimes be the cause of just complaint.

Yet it is my opinion in general, that where servants are really conscientious in their discharge of duty, God will so overrule their master's hearts, be they avaricious or benevolent, that their religious privileges shall be no way abridged. Let every professor, who stands in the relation of a servant, hear, and regard Paul's injunction, Eph. vi. 5—8. "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as unto Christ: not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good-will doing service, as to the Lord, and not unto men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." From whence it is observable, that Christian servants are called to act in all things towards their masters, as if it were to Christ himself, and that not with a view to please men, so much as to do the will of God, from the heart, from a single aim to glorify

their Redeemer. Or, as this apostle elsewhere expresseth it, "That ye may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things," 1 Tim. vi. 4. Without an observance of such rules, it is plain, that you cannot be an honour, nor a blessing, to the church of Jesus.

II. I would address myself to those who stand in the relation of husbands and fathers, and in whose conduct slothfulness, in respect to the things either of the civil or religious life, is of the most malignant influence. In this case it is certainly true, that, "through much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through." There is not a character among professors more disagreeable; none upon whom the Scriptures pour more abundant contempt, 1 Tim. v. 8. "But if any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." There is indeed something shocking and detestable in the character of an idle parent, and the more abominable still, if he is a professor, and pretends to the knowledge of things spiritual. I have known some of this gossiping class, who understood every thing but their own proper duty; and who were ready and active enough, in every department, besides that in which divine providence had placed them. Wretched must that woman be who is yoked with such a husband. Deplorable the state of those children who are under the tuition of such a parent. Burdened and grieved must that church be, who are unhappy enough to suffer such a one to creep into their fellowship; but a church hath the means of relief in its own hands, as pointed out by the Scriptures; and excommunication of the party removes the encumbrance from them.

That this is their immediate duty; that a person who provides not for his own family, without some visible impediment which shall make his incapacity manifest, shall not abide in gospel fellowship, is very evident from the apostle's description of such a one; "He hath denied the faith by his *deeds* (however good his verbal confession may be) and is *worse* than an infidel." Now if he hath denied the faith, he is no fit companion for believers, the saints of Jesus. If he were but on a level with infidels, we should not tolerate him in our communion. And can it be that,

being worse than an infidel, he shall continue to enjoy the privileges of God's children, and be suffered to continue a dishonour to the name of Jesus, and a stain to the Christian profession?

But, alas! the influence of his impious idleness in his other connexions, seem to be irremediable, without some wonderful and amazing interposition of divine providence. What penury must attend his table! What wretched circumstances must his spouse, however virtuous, experience? But the greatest evil attends his unhappy offspring, in a case more pitiable than that of orphans, yet deprived of that assistance, with which the circumstances of orphans are in some measure relieved. His unhappy children are not only exposed to penury and pinching hunger, but are denied the means of instruction; perhaps so far neglected, as to be incapable of reading their Bibles. It is but a few days since, I conversed with two men, sons of such a parent, who lamented to me the conduct of their father, in totally neglecting their education; the want of which exposed them to such difficulties in life, as they might otherwise, in all probability, have avoided. And he also, by the way, has been a flaming professor; and a zealous stickler for the more curious distinctions, with which some highfliers delight to amuse themselves.

But their entire want of education is not the whole of the evil that arises from the unmanly, and impious indolence of parents of this character. Their example is baneful, and destructive of the morals of their children, and they prove, if grace prevent not, the instrument of their entire ruin. If they follow the example of such fathers, they also will take to the ways of idleness; and when they come to reason upon its effects, must of course be led to think very indifferently of their parent's religion, and perhaps throw off all religious restraints whatever. And who knows where the end may be?

I descend into a description of this part of low life, not with so much as a hope of being read by the parties concerned; but with a view to stir up Christian societies to guard against characters so pernicious, and to excite those who may happen to be conversant with such people, to treat them as enemies to the cross of Christ, that they may

be ashamed, and study a reformation of manners. He that is attentive to the duties of his station, in the church, in the family, and in the world, will find no time at all to devote to idleness and dissipation. May God grant, that a sense of the value of precious time may rest upon my heart, and that of my reader; that we both may walk circumspectly, redeeming every moment to the important purposes of our soul concerns.

THE

CHANGES OF EPHRAIM;

OR THE

BACKSLIDER'S WARNING.

The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways.—Prov. xiv. 14.

Of all the threatenings denounced in Scripture against backsliding, I know of none more terrible than this; this, which shews us, that the Almighty has ways and means sufficient, in his own hand, awfully to correct and punish the backslidings of his people, consistently with his own indissoluble relation to them as their Father who is in heaven. The many ways in which he manifesteth his paternal displeasure are all to be dreaded; but none so much as his leaving us to choose our own way, till we are glutted with our choice. If sin is visited with a rod, and our transgressions with the stripes of the children of men, it will undoubtedly bring poignant grief and heart-wringing anguish upon us; yet exceedingly inferior to that most awful punishment of heart-backslidings denounced in the text.

Backsliding in heart necessarily supposeth an antecedent rectitude of principle, and a cleaving to the Lord, with sincerity and ardour; therefore is inapplicable to those who had put on only an outward profession, and for a time followed the form of religion, either with some sinister view, or from an heated imagination. None can be said to backslide in heart, but those whose hearts have followed after Jesus; but those swine and dogs that returned to their mire and vomit, never adhered to the Lord with their hearts, notwithstanding for a season they associated with his people. The words can therefore be applied only to the subjects of faith, who, being bewitched with the idols of earth, draw back from their simplicity; by a deceived

heart being turned aside from the corn of Paradise, to feed upon sordid ashes; forsaking the pure streams of the river of God, drink of the polluted waters of Abana and Parphar; flee down to Egypt for help and refuge, and trust not in the Lord in the day of their trouble.

A man may be a backslider in heart, even when he cannot be charged with any open notorious sin; for it is possible that a thousand things may draw away the heart and affections from God, when there is nothing in the natural constitution that violently inclines unto any evil usually deemed enormous. This backsliding of heart, is at least equally dangerous with that, where the constitutional propensities to the greatest evils are strong, and overcome the feeble efforts of the mind in resistance; as it is more difficult to fasten conviction of heart-backsliding upon the sober man, than upon the notorious offender. Besides, it renders a person equally useless, although not quite so burdensome to a church; for the service of which he has neither hand nor inclination; so that at best he is but a barren fig-tree in the garden of our God. What listlessness to, what deadness in, duty, what formality, what hypocrisy may be discovered, where there is in reality nothing chargeable upon the moral conduct? And consequently, how little of the spirit and power of religion may in such a case be experienced.

A man may, through the violence of temptation, the strength of corruption, or unhappy opportunity serving to the occasion, be precipitated into the most loathsome and notorious evils, without commencing backsliding in heart. This I think is apparent from the case of Noah, who, on a day of festivity, drank himself drunk, and yet of his heart-backsliding, we have nothing upon record. This was also the case of righteous Lot; he was ensnared by the subtilty of his daughters, and though chargeable with both drunkenness and incest, is not reproved as a backslider in heart. And surely Peter was no backslider in heart, even when he denied his Master, as is clear from his professed regard to him on all other occasions. Heart-backsliding is less rapid in its progress, invades the misled believer by slow degrees, and is long before it arrives at its state. That covetous disposition, which drew Demas away from Paul the apostle, was in all probability rankling in his bosom, and as a gan-

grene eating up the vitals of religion in his soul, long before it separated him from the way of truth. Nothing can be more natural, than for the person openly to backslide from God and his ways, whose heart and affections have been so long departed into the world.

Sacred history does not, that I know of, furnish any instance so suitable for the illustration of the awful proposition recorded in the text, as its account of Ephraim. In him we may trace the believer in the warmth of espousal love; in all the stages of heart-backsliding, till even surfeited with his own ways; as well as in the humbled state of restoration to his God and Saviour. I shall therefore illustrate the point from the general history of that character, as recorded by the pen of infallibility.

I. Ephraim is a fit type of the believer in the warmth of his espousal love, for he was not always a froward and rebellious child any more than my reader. He had formerly his season of love and enjoyment, a season of walking and following God in his appointed ways, a season of teaching, leading, drawing, and special liberty. Yet Ephraim became a backslider in heart, and a rebel in his conversation.

"I (saith the Lord) taught Ephraim to go, taking him by the arms," Hos. xi. 3. As if he had said, I shewed unto Ephraim his sore, his soul disease; I caused him to apprehend his danger on account of his sinfulness; I set the emptiness of all times' enjoyments before him, and taught him to go from the tents of sin, and paths of error, to Jesus, for pardon, acceptance, and salvation. I taught him to go in the path of duty, and held his arm in the way of obedience: I led him up to my sanctuary, and caused him to delight in the place where mine honour dwelleth. "I was to them as they that take off the yoke," Hos. xi. 4. Such was the deliverance I wrought for him, and so far did my deliverance exceed his highest expectations. When he stood shivering in his chains at the very brink of destruction, I set an open door of hope in his view, put songs of deliverance into his mouth, and made him glad through my salvation. "I drew him with cords of a man, and bands of love," Hos. xi. 4. and all my ways were pleasantness, and my paths felicity to him. How answerable is this to the young convert, whose paths are strewed with sweetest

flowers, and whose feet delight to move in swift obedience. What genial, what halcyon days, are the days of espousal love? Then can we follow the Lord with delight, even in the wilderness, in a land that is not sown; for all his paths drop fatness, and the wilderness itself is to the soul as a fruitful field and a land that is blessed. How precious is the word? How delightful are his ordinances? How desirable is the house of prayer? Tell the young convert, that even he may yet become a backslider in heart, wilfully dishonour his God, and crucify afresh his Saviour. He will answer,

O never, never, whilst my life endures,
Will I forsake my loving Lord! Despise
That precious blood which all my evil cures;
That dearest love which wipes my weeping eyes.

Draw back they may who never knew his love,
Cast off his sway who never felt his grace;
My soul rejects earth's pomp, and dwells above;
My heart delights to gaze on Jesus' face.

II. We have Ephraim to trace in all the stages of heart-backsliding. The first stage of which is "a divided heart," Hos. x. 2. which is an offence to the Almighty. A man cannot at once give up communion with God; at once return to the embrace of abhorred idols. But by degrees he may be brought to that, which at first would make his very flesh to shudder, and his soul to stand aghast. Whatever advances a backslider in heart may make in departure from God, they all begin with a division in the heart and affections. One part of his heart must as yet be held sacred to the Redeemer, but this is thought to justify the devoting of the other part to idols; by which I mean every thing that tends to draw off the heart from Emmanuel. Now the unhappy man, having his heart in part at the idol's shrine, of course a moiety of his time must be spent in the idol's temple; and thus, if grace prevents not, he will go on till he become like Ephraim, "as a cake not turned," Hos. vii. 8. neither baked nor unbaked; not properly a Christian, nor yet altogether profane; not fit, strictly speaking, either for God or the Devil, for the church or for the world.

2. But here he stops not. "The divided heart dwindles into an empty vine," Hos. x. 1. where there may be verdure and plenty of foliage, as with the fig-tree cursed by the blessed Jesus. By its appearance, at a distance, it promised fruit, but upon examination, none was to be found upon its branches. A person may have made great advances in heart-backsliding, yet keep up a profession of religion, and frequent the place where prayer is wont to be made; as backsliding may be supposed to be drawing towards its state of crisis, when it comes to a neglect of the stated opportunities of hearing the word and prayer. But all the external duties of religion, performed without the heart, are only as so many leaves upon a fruitless and barren vine. In such a case there is no advantage to be derived from that professor; he will even glory in giving a a church *no trouble.* Nevertheless he is a troubler in Israel, seeing he withholds from the community that which he ought to supply as a joint of the common body. A withered member must necessarily be burdensome to the body which carries it; and such are all, in church relation, who study not usefulness in their proper sphere. An empty wine is a nuisance in the vineyard, and therefore it is said, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" It naturally tends to prevent the sun beams nourishing those which grow in its neighbourhood.

3. But let a professor once dwindle into an *empty vine,* and it is much if he makes no farther advances in heart-backsliding. Hence we read next of Ephraim, that "he hath mixed himself with idols," Hos. vii. 8. or with idol-worshippers; professed worldlings, known to be destitute of the fear and love of God. When a Christian can once relish, and prefer the company and conversation of the ungodly without remorse and woundings of heart, it is a proof that the leprosy has eaten deep into the walls, and that he is become *obstinate* in his *error.* The most awful consequences may now be apprehended. We shall scarcely conceive worse than are likely to be the issue, seeing, without a miracle, such a person will not be reclaimed, without being left to fill himself with his own ways, and to have enough of idols, and idol-worshippers, like Ephraim. I might largely shew the evils of this conduct, but as I study brevity, I shall therefore consider Ephraim in the

4. Stage of heart-backsliding, which is *self-conceit;* for if he has any fits of goodness now, though but as the morning cloud which passeth away, those fits shall be employed in the niceties of mere speculation, instead of substantial religion. For as the power of vital religion declines, it is possible that knowledge of metaphysical and scholastic divinity may increase; and even when the soul gets lean and barren, he may say, with Ephraim, Hos. xii. 8. "Yet I am become rich, I have gotten me substance;" or, like those in the Revelation, who said, "We are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." So that from the gingle of mere speculations, the very backslider in heart may become like a fair heifer, which "loveth to tread out the corn," Hos. x. 11. and judge himself most fit both to teach and govern. For as nearness to God lays the creature low in the very dust of abasement, and pours a becoming contempt on all creature endowments, backsliding, or distance from him, naturally tends to diminish the riches of mercy, and veil the glories of infinite grace; and in an equal proportion magnifies every thing human and creaturely. So that in a state of backsliding, the eyes are gradually shut to our own nothingness, and keen to point out every personal attainment; and we may lay it down as an invariable maxim, that a growing opinion of our own importance and attainments, is an infallible sign of a backsliding heart. But this is not the full end of the backslider's way; for now,

5. We shall find him with Ephraim making altars to sin, Hos. viii. 11. perhaps, indeed, but few in number, and that privately too at first; but the beginnings of a sinful course is as the letting in of water, which may be in drops only, and yet end in an inundation or overflowing flood. Having begun with making only a private altar to one sin, the backslider in heart will not stop till, if permitted, he hath made altars to many sins; and lick up the filthy vomit, which once was his utter loathing and abhorrence. Wound religion, grieve the spirit and people of God, and put the Lord that brought him to open shame; having his "root dried," Hos. ix. 16. and, in appearance, as if he had never known the power of the Redeemer's resurrection, nor the fellowship of his sufferings. Yet still the backslider in heart may strive to support his sinking credit, as

a professor, and, like Ephraim his type, may squander his substance in bribing the good opinion of his dependants, or, as the prophet expresseth it, "in hiring lovers," Hos. viii. 9. But in this his success shall be but small, for it is the divine determination, that rebellious Ephraim shall be covered with shame; that his glory shall flee away as a bird, and that the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways.

6. Ephraim is now like a wild ass's colt in the wilderness, snuffing up the wind, and following the east-wind, Hos. xii. 1. and as soon may the ass fill his belly with the east-wind, as Ephraim, or our heart-backslider, satisfy himself with his idols and vanities; let the prodigal desire ever so ardently to fill his belly with the husks which swine eat, he shall find that no man giveth unto him; and that, unless he himself were a swine, he cannot be satisfied with swinish sustenance. To be thus turned aside from the straight and narrow way; to feed upon ashes, or to desire the husks which swine eat whilst there is bread enough in our father's house, and to spare, whilst even his hired servants live in plenty, is a case most deplorable, and argues a most awful state of declension. O my reader, when your heart but begins to hanker after the world, in any of its modes, and to take up its rest in the enjoyments of time, you have need to be upon your guard against its farther departure from God. For the heart, once entered into the paths of backsliding, will never of itself stop, till it is quite filled with its own way, and tired out with idols of its own formation.

7. Another aggravation still is found to attend heart-backsliding, as in the case of Ephraim, and that is, dealing deceitfully with God. "Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit," Hos. xi. 12. And amongst dull and formal professors, especially with backsliders in heart, there is much more of this than at first view may be apprehended. All worship in which the heart is not fully engaged is but lying worship; and all such praises as proceed not from a spirit of gratitude are but praises of deceit. Therefore the same charge may as well be brought against us, as against Ephraim; when Hosannahs languish on our tongue, and our devotion dies upon our lips; when our worship is formal and without

the heart; which is, which must be the case when the heart is, by the attraction of any object whatever, withdrawn from God our chief, our superlative good. On account of all these things it is said, Hos. xii. 14. "Ephraim hath provoked him (God) most bitterly; therefore shall he leave his blood upon him: and his reproach shall his Lord return upon him." From whence it is clear that God, speaking after the manner of man, may be most bitterly provoked, and resolve to punish the backslider in heart, even when he cannot give him up to final ruin; even when he owns the filial relation still to subsist. The departure of the prodigal from his father's house; the rebellions of froward and stubborn Ephraim, did not cut off their title to sonship, did not cause the father to disinherit the one or the other. This leads me,

III. To take a brief survey of the conduct of God, in case of heart-backsliding, as it is discovered in the account of Ephraim; and we find it to be in all respects becoming the divine character; becoming God, who can make no allowance for sin, and who, notwithstanding, loves his people with an unalterable regard.

1. Heart-backslidings may be long hid from the view of man, and may be of such a nature, that they cannot become matters of church examination; for whilst Ephraim can say, "In all my labours they shall find no iniquity in me, that were sin," Hos. xii. 8. he has those at defiance who reprove in the gate, and may account himself still to be a very respectable member of Christian society. But Ephraim's iniquity, how private soever, heart-backslidings, be they ever so secret, are all naked and open to the believer's God; are all perfectly known to him with whom we have to do. For his eyes see the very thoughts, purposes, and intents of the heart; his eyelids try every action, which lies hid from his churches, and he knows how to bring every secret work into open light, and to publish upon the housetop that which is done under cover of the sable gloom of midnight. Therefore he declares, that "Ephraim, the heart-backslider, shall receive shame," Hos. x. 6. shall be compassed about by the iniquity of his heels, and be found out by his many revoltings. As his iniquity is known unto God, he certainly will make it known unto others; so that shame shall cover the countenance of heart-backsliders. It

is from this, that I account for the secret sins of the Lord's own people, having frequently been brought to light in a manner to us otherwise unaccountable; and indeed it is a privilege to backsliding believers, that the Lord does thus set their secret sins in the light of his countenance, seeing it is for their recovery, and not for their final ruin. And hence too it is, that private backslidings are frequently punished by notorious falls, and grievous outbreakings in sin, to the covering of the offender with shame and confusion, and filling his heart with the deepest contrition and remorse.

2. God is not an indifferent spectator to Ephraim's heart-backsliding, but is represented as commiserating his wretched case, and reasoning upon what is proper to be done. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim?" Hos. xi. 8. As if he had said, O Ephraim, thou hast provoked me most bitterly by thy sins. It were just in me to give thee up to the spoiler, and to the power of the dragon; to make thee such an example of my vengeance against sin as I made Admah; and set thee up to everlasting infamy as I did Zeboim, seeing thy sinfulness is, in all respects, equal to theirs. But how shall I give thee up, having loved thee freely, with an everlasting love; with a love independent on any obedience of thine; having chosen thee for mine own, how shall I alter my purpose, and change my council concerning thee. I have given thee the promise of life before the world began, and how shall I give thee up? How shall I prove unfaithful, in departing from the word I have spoken, and revoking the promised blessing? No, Ephraim; backsliding as thou art, I will not return to destroy thee, Hos. xi. 9. I will have respect unto my covenant, for I am God, and not man; I will not execute the fierceness of my wrath, for my heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together, I will surely have mercy, even upon backsliding Ephraim. Thus God establisheth his ancient purpose of grace and mercy towards Ephraim the backslider in heart. Yet,

3. He will give no countenance to his iniquity, nor in any ways connive at his sin. Whilst mercy smiles tenderness and compassion towards his person, infinite holiness frowns upon his backsliding and rebellion. Like a tender

father, who has only the good of his son at heart, his bosom glows with ardent love to the child of his loins, whilst his countenance frowns on his obstinacy and rebellion. God, although his love to Ephraim's person be unparalleled, can in nowise become an accomplice in his idolatry.

"No," saith the Lord, Hos. v. 15. "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early." As if he had said, Ephraim is so taken up with his idols, so busy in making altars for them, he has no time nor inclination to think on the rock from whence he was hewn, or to recollect the days of his espousal love, when he could have followed me any where, even in the wilderness, in a land that is not sown. Ephraim is now at ease, he can live without his God; his heart is so bent upon his pleasures, so taken up with his hired lovers, that I have no honour to expect from him in his present obstinate and earthly humour. I will therefore hide myself from him, withdraw the comforts of my Spirit, and leave him to that darkness which is his choice; leave him to experience what vain things idols are, in the day of his calamity. Nothing but calamity will bring him to his right mind; nothing but famine will bring the wretched prodigal to think of returning to the house of his father. But in the day of affliction, when all help fails, and the vanity of creature-trust is detected, they will seek unto me, even the backslider in heart shall then return unto me, and cry, "My father, receive me, for thou wast the guide of my youth."

4. Accordingly we find Ephraim's God declaring, Isa. lvii. 17, that, "for the iniquity of his covetousness he was wroth with him and smote him; he hid himself and was wroth, and he (Ephraim) went on frowardly in the way of his heart." This is exactly answerable to the threatening of his departure already referred to, and from which we see, that although God hides himself from, and is wroth with, backsliders in heart, he does not at once give them up as incurable. "For I was wroth, and smote him, saith the Lord; I hewed them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth," Hos. vi. 5. So that the backslider in heart has many a wound by the ministry of the word; and the wandering spouse many a blow from the watchmen, and keepers of the walls. This hewing by the prophets, and

smiting by the word of the Lord, may sometimes produce a little gleam of momentary goodness; but, alas! it is like Ephraim's, as the morning cloud, or the early dew, neither of which can live out the space of a day. But more commonly these wounds inflicted, irritate and provoke to anger; for, let God hew as much by his prophets, and smite by the words of his mouth, as he may, Ephraim will go on frowardly in the way of his own heart, and justify himself in so doing. Hence, one of the first visible signs of heart-backsliding, is a dislike to a faithful, searching, practical ministry, and when only smooth things are deemed profitable.

5. The next step which the Almighty taketh with the backslider in heart is awful indeed, enough to make the very heart to tremble. God is withdrawn from him, hath smote him by his word and providence, and all to no purpose, for still he goes on frowardly in the way of his own heart; therefore he now saith to the watchmen, "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone," Hos. iv. 17. hewing will answer no further end; his disease is beyond an ordinary remedy. His heart is ensnared; the disease lies deep within, the vitals are corrupted, and the rank venom has infected the whole soul. Let him alone; tease him no more; give yourselves no farther concern or trouble about him. Why should he be stricken any more, he will revolt more and more? Hence it is, that during the day of Ephraim's rebuke, a spirit of reproof shall naturally, without any art or study of the minister, be discernible in the ministry of the word; and when the Lord says, "Let him alone," that spirit of reproof shall cease, and the ministers shall be released from certain bands, from which this spirit of reproof against Ephraim proceeded. "For the watchmen of Ephraim are with my God," Hos. ix. 8. The prophet, a snare of a fowler in all his ways, and hatred in the house of his God. So that those watchmen, who are divinely appointed, come forth under the influence of just such a spirit in their ministry, as it hath pleased God for the time to anoint them with. And even backsliders in heart, however far they are got on their way to Egypt, may have common sense and candour enough to believe, that the minister, who is laid under necessity, from bonds upon his own spirit, to preach doctrine, which he knows must needs be offensive

to many of his hearers, cannot lead a life the most cheerful, nor enjoy a mind exempted from care. Some tenderness is therefore due even to those prophets, by whom God is pleased to hew, and to smite his backsliding Ephraims'. We are all ready to condemn Pashur for smiting Jeremiah on the cheek; but from the same spirit as that of Pashur's, proceeds all resentment against hard sentences from the pulpit.

But delicate Ephraim is like a fair heifer, and cannot bear to be hewed and smitten. Well, let him alone, let him gorge and glut himself with idols; let the backslider in heart be filled with his own way. I shall no longer hold him under restraint. Awful injunction! alarming circumstance!

6. What is now to be expected but Ephraim's final ruin and everlasting overthrow. Still there is mercy with Ephraim's God, and although he changeth his dispensations and mode of operation, his heart is eternally the same, his love passeth not away. In his love he rests for ever, and for ever delights to shew mercy. Notwithstanding Ephraim shall find his God adverse to all his present designs. For the Lord hath taken the backslider in heart out of the hands of prophets and churches, who are now to treat him as a tree, whose branches are withered, and whose root is dried up; he will take the work into his own hand; and to trace his ways towards him, after the ceasing of ministerial and church reproof, may not be unprofitable either to me or my reader.

1. "I will be as a moth to Ephraim, and to the house of Judah as rottenness," Hos. v. 12. as if he had said, Ephraim promiseth himself great increase from his unwearied and covetous pursuit of the world. He expects great peace, pleasure, and delight to arise from accumulated wealth. But I will confound his measures, and dissolve his schemes in air. I will be as a moth in his substance, so that he shall not prosper. I will bewilder him in his connexions, so that his very idols shall become his grief, seeing they have been his snare. To this, if I mistake not, may be attributed many of the great losses in trade, which some are tried with, and an insensible waste of substance with which others are visited. What is this, but the Almighty being a moth

to them as he was to Ephraim? But being a moth is not all that is threatened against backsliding Ephraim; for, saith the Lord,

2. "I will be as a lion unto Ephraim, and as a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will take away, and none shall rescue," Hos. v. 14. If a moth in his substance is not sufficient to reclaim him, the Lord will become a lion in his family, to rend and tear away his dearest delights and choicest comforts. Whatever is nearest in nature, and likely to strike the heart with the most painful sensations and wringing anguish, shall be torn away, when God ariseth terribly to shake his dwelling. Now a darling child for whom was great diligence in providing, is torn away, and nothing can atone for its forfeited life, forfeited by its doating parent. A beloved wife is rent from the dear embrace of the husband. One idol falls, and is shattered to shivers on this hand, and another on that, till all the altars, which Ephraim has been long making, are laid into one common heap of desolation. And admitting that such bereaving dispensations should not take place, God has many ways of becoming as a lion to Ephraim, and rending his creature-comfort to pieces. Have we never seen a beloved wife, who has been the means of drawing off the husband's heart from God, by an over-fond attachment to her, spared on purpose to become his most weighty cross? Have we never seen a child, the object of the parents' too warm affection and solicitude; to procure a fortune for whom every power was exerted, and religion itself must give way, spared, to be the undoer of family peace, and the breaker of his parents' spirits?

The holy God hath promised in such a case, that "he will meet the backslider as a bear bereft of her whelps—That he will rend the caul of his heart; that he will devour them like a lion; that the wild beast of the forest shall tear them," Hos. xiii. 8. I say promised, because the judgments specified are denounced in the greatest mercy to ungrateful backsliders. Were not the caul of the heart rent, or in other words, the callous disposition removed, how should conviction enter, and how should the heart be broken for sin, or the eye be lifted up to a pierced Saviour? When their comforts are devoured in providence, as a lion devours his prey, they will begin to inquire after God, who

was the guide of their youth: when the wild beast of the forest shall tear them with his accusations and snares, they will flee for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel, and seek for shelter in the everlasting covenant.

3. Whenever the rebuke shall come, and God, as a lion, tears the backslider's comfort to pieces; "Ephraim shall be dumb in the day of rebuke:" He shall have nothing to charge upon the divine conduct. He must be silent, however "oppressed and broken in judgment;" however grievous his wounds and sore his sickness; convinced that all these evils he hath brought upon himself. Estranged from the throne of grace, "he is like a silly dove without heart;" Hos. vii. 11. he has not an heart to flee to God for relief. Therefore it is said, Hos. v. 13. "When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent unto king Jareb for help." But, alas! when the Lord riseth up to make waste, who shall deliver? Who is king Jareb, that he should counteract omnipotence? And how deplorable is the state of that soul which is shut out, as it were, from God in the day of his calamity, by the blindness and stupidity which his backsliding has brought upon him!

But now the Lord having stretched forth his hand in a stripping and exposing way against Ephraim, he will not turn it back till it hath accomplished his deliverance. We may therefore,

IV. Attend to the humbled state of the backslider in his restoration. Ephraim being let alone, and permitted to follow the idols to which he was joined; having his heart-backslidings punished by outward sins, which have brought shame upon him; being smote and wounded by the word and providence; God being become to him as a *moth* in his substance, a lion in his every way; and proving the skill of king Jareb to be but ignorance, filled with his own way, and surfeited with idols, he now loathes them as much heretofore he loved them. "What have I any more to do with idols?" Hos. xiv. 8. One would have thought once, to have seen busy Ephraim making his altars to sin, that he would never have been tired of his idols, but now we find him quite sick of them; the backslider in heart is altogether filled with his own way. But how this came to pass, is a matter of pertinent inquiry; seeing he has not lately

been hewed by the prophets, nor smitten by the word of the Lord.

The ground of this alteration is accounted for, Isa. lvii. 17. "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him." It was not God's being angry with Ephraim, that could reclaim him from walking frowardly in the way of his own heart; it was not hewing him by the prophets, nor smiting him by the word of his mouth, that could make Ephraim sick of his idols. I have seen his ways, I have left him till he is surfeited with them; I myself will heal him, and restore comforts to him; for I will surely have mercy upon Ephraim, as a pleasant child and the son of my affection.

The divine comforter having taken the work into his own hand, we soon find Ephraim another man, tired of all his idols, flinging them away from him. "What have I any more to do with idols?" What good have I ever reaped from them? What benefit can I obtain by following them? Unhappy is he who is left to fill himself with his own way. Then it is that poor Ephraim speaks tremblingly, under a sense of most grievous heart-backslidings, and his awful practical departure from God. Ephraim is no longer like a fair heifer that loveth to tread out the corn; but is now under a very humbling sense of the most aggravated guilt and conscious rebellion. He has done with Assyria, "Ashur shall not save us;" with Egypt, "for we will not ride upon horses;" with idols of every name, "for we will not say any more to the works of our own hands, Ye are our gods," Hos. xiv. 3. Seeing that idols have been the ruin of his comforts, and the bane of his happiness, his soul now loathes them with the most perfect abhorrence. What have I to do with them?—I, who have been taught by God himself to go;—I, whom he condescended to lead by the arm, and to guard in my tottering infancy;—what have I to do with *idols*, seeing I have the living God to adore?

It is now that Ephraim bemoans himself, and with regret surveys his past conduct; every altar which he had made unto sin, lies with a heavy weight upon his conscience; and every idol strikes him through with horror. "Surely I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himself, Thou

hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after I was turned, I repented; and after I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth," Jer. xxxi. 18, 19.—Ephraim's glory is now in the dust, his daughters of music are brought low, his beauty is faded as the shaken leaf, and the iniquity of his heels compasseth him about. He begins now to come to himself, and to see that the hand of God is upon him. Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised; I feel thy hand and confess thy power; but alas! thy chastisements have not produced the desired effect. So stupid and ignorant was I, I was as a beast before thee; I felt thy rod, but I received not correction. As untractable as an unbroken bullock untaught, unaccustomed to the yoke. I was chastised, and yet froward, thoughtless, and insensible of danger, as that animal when led to the slaughter-house. Now the backslider in heart begins to look to a pierced Saviour, and mourn in bitterness, as one that mourns for an only son. Now he hath no pleasure in all the things of which he is ashamed: the very remembrance of his backslidings is bitterness to him.

Filled with his own way; fallen by his iniquity; ashamed and confounded amidst his reproach; every sandy foundation sapped; every lying refuge swept away; what must the poor backsliding Ephraim do? Whither must he flee for relief? To whom shall he go? on whom shall he call for help? Here he sits and bemoans his wretchedness and stupidity, and perhaps greatly questioning whether there is yet mercy remains with the Highest for him; or if it is possible, that such a criminal may obtain pardon.

But he hears; in a transporting hour he hears the voice of mercy publishing the gracious invitation, and calling of him by name. Jer. iii. 12. "Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep mine anger for ever." How pleasant this invitation to the poor backslider, trembling under the weight of his own ingratitude! But still, to remove all doubt from Ephraim's bosom, the invitation is repeated yet in stronger terms, Jer. v. 14. "Turn, O backsliding children, for I am

married unto you." Amazing grace! Astonishing mercy! That Ephraim should be owned as a child, a pleasant child, even after all his backslidings! Yet so it is expressly declared, Jer. xxxi. 20. "Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still." Yea, as if the owning of Ephraim for a son were not sufficient to encourage the trembling backslider to look up; a nearer, the nearest of all, even a conjugal relation is pointed out as subsisting. "Return, for I am married to you;" I rest in my love, and hate putting away, notwithstanding ye have dealt very treacherously with me.

But, alas! how can such a sinner return to him, such a backslider hope for favour? I am ashamed of my rags and nakedness; helpless by reason of my wounds and broken bones. Gladly would I venture, yet I dread to approach his seat. The voice of mercy again is heard, a third time repeating the encouraging word, "Return, ye backsliding children, I will heal your backslidings." This wins the heart, attracts the soul to the way of his steps. "Behold, we come unto thee." Inspires the soul with returning confidence. "For thou art the Lord our God," Jer. iii. 22.

How gracious, kind, and condescending is our God, who knowing, that whatever encouragement might have been given to sinners, the vilest of sinners in general, it would not have reached the poor backslider's case, nor yielded comfort to bemoaning Ephraim; tenderly calls *them* by name, *backsliders;* return to me, ye *backsliders*, &c. Thus might the backslider have reasoned: "What if rest is proclaimed to the weary, liberty to the captives, healing to the sick, and pardon to the condemned? What is this to a backslider in heart; a revolting rebel; an apostate? What is it all to a wilful rebel; a sinner daringly obstinate; an apostate who has crucified again the Lord Jesus Christ to himself; trampled on the blood of the covenant; and sinned so grievously after such illuminations? Therefore what are they all to me?" But God, to make his system of grace complete, is pleased to call the backslider in heart by his own proper name, and openly avow his relation to him, notwithstanding all his treachery and baseness.

When Jesus sent a general message to his disciples, informing them of his resurrection, and mentioneth them in

the gross, as a collective body, "tell my disciples," he was graciously pleased to send a special message to poor fallen Peter, whom he tenderly mentions by name, *tell Peter.* Amazing tenderness and love to a fallen disciple, whose wounded spirit stood in need of a special cordial; whose broken heart had occasion for the balsam of life. Even so the kind, the blessed news of life and peace, through the blood of the cross, is published to sinners in general; but there is a special message of love sent to the poor backslider in person and by name: and yet I must account this same backslider, of all others, to be the very vilest and hell-deserving sinner.

This special invitation given to the backslider, filled with his own ways, and lamenting his frowardness and rebellion, brings him to resolve upon returning. "Come and let us return to the Lord, for we have fallen by our iniquity. He hath torn us as a lion in our way," because of our perverseness; "and he will heal us," because of his own mercy; "for in him the fatherless," the helpless, the outcasts, and perishing find relief. "He hath smitten us" by his providence, and wounded us by the words of his mouth; "but he will bind us up." He only is a physician to the wounded spirit; with him only is the sovereign balsam that can give life and vigour to the dying heart. "Behold, we come to thee, for thou art the Lord our God."

But how, alas, shall guilty Ephraim, the backslider in in heart, return to the Lord? With what shall he procure admittance into his favour? How shall he be justified with God? "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Mic. vi. 6, 7. No, Ephraim, no, this is not the way of peace. "He will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goat out of thy fold; for every beast of the forest is his, and the cattle on a thousand hills. If he were hungry, he would not tell thee, for the earth and all its fulness is his. Will thy God eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" Psal. l. 9, 10. 12, 13.

Thy God himself; God against whom thou hast griev-

ously sinned, kindly condescends to put thee on a more acceptable, and less expensive way, Hos. xiv. 2. "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto him, Take away all iniquity, receive us graciously, so will we render to thee the calves of our lips." Take with you words, the words of his gracious invitation, and promise to backsliders such as thyself. Say unto him, "Take away all iniquity, according to thine own promise, for I cannot subdue my sinfulness." Take with you words of confession. The returning prodigal took with him those words, that he might make peace with his offended father. Luke xv. 18, 19. "I will arise," said he, "and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee. I am no more worthy to be called thy son." Go thou and do so likewise. Jer. iii. 13. "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast not obeyed my voice, saith the Lord."

Ephraim's trembling voice and faultering speech indicates his approaching exaltation. His idols are cast off; the prodigal hath forsaken the sties of the swine, and now returns to his long forsaken father; sometimes encouraging a hope of acceptance, at others overwhelmed with despondency and fear. With dull and heavy pace, with a cloudy and dejected countenance, he passeth on as his feebleness will suffer him. When the distraction of his mind will let him, meditating on, how he may lay himself low enough at the feet of his father; when to his astonishment and confusion, he sees his tender father running up to meet, and in an ecstacy of joy embracing and caressing him with all the ardour of paternal affection. "What, Ephraim, my dear son! Ephraim, my pleasant child! I do earnestly remember thee still, my son! My bowels are troubled for thy distressing circumstances; but I will surely have mercy on thee, saith the Lord." Jer. xxxi. 20. "I will heal thy backslidings; I will love thee freely, for mine anger is turned away from thee," Hos. xiv. 4.

Gratitude now swells the bosom of the overjoyed prodigal; Ephraim, restored to the embraces of his God, without any upbraiding for his past irregularities and folly, can no longer be silent in the praises of grace, "O, my God! I will praise thee, for although thou wast angry with me, and

smotest me, thine anger is now turned away, and thou comfortest me," Isa. xii. 1.

Paternal affection cannot stifle its ardour. It must discover itself in fresh caresses of the newly returned son. "Take away these filthy garments which deform my child; put upon him the best robe, put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. Bring hither the fatted calf and kill; and let us eat and be merry. For this my son Ephraim, whom you all gave up as dead, is now returned from his idols to the house of his father; he who was once lost to a sense of shame, is now found in the way of duty and privilege," Luke xv. compared with Hos. xv. "Oh Ephraim, my son, I will be as the dew unto thee; thou shalt yet grow as the lily, and spread forth thy roots as Lebanon. I will cause thy branches to spread, thy beauty to become as the olive-tree, and thy smell as Lebanon. Thou shalt revive as the corn, and grow as the vine, and thy scent shall be as the wine of Lebanon."

To conclude, I am aware that freewillers, enemies to the grace of Christ, will by no means relish the manner in which I have handled this subject; supposing that threatenings of eternal damnation are necessary to awe the believer into a continuance of well-doing. But I would ask every serious person, whether he is as much affected by threatenings of that nature, as he is from the mere apprehension of being left to fall into sin, to the wounding of his own soul, and dishonour of religion? And if the latter is found to be the case, I hope I shall be justified in handling the subject just as it lies before me in Scripture.

A

CAUTION TO DRUNKARDS;

OR, THE

SIN OF INTEMPERANCE CENSURED.

Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess.—Eph. v. 18.

INTRODUCTION.

SUCH a discourse as is professedly upon the sin of drunkenness, needs no other apology for its appearance in the world, than an appeal to the times in which we live; times when the conduct of many professors is notoriously loose; the affections of many others but lukewarm; the glow of apostolic zeal, and the strict holiness of primitive Christians, almost eradicated. Strange it might seem to those unacquainted with it; yet true it is, that we have in our days professors, who can indulge to liberties unknown to our ancestors in the faith. Some are on one hand patriots fully engaged in the popular quarrel; others are statesmen and courtiers, using every sophistical art, uniformly to vindicate all the proceedings of our governors; whilst true and undefiled religion is left to the pursuit of others, less engaged in the transitory concerns of worldly states. Others there are, who profess not to be either patriots or statesmen, who are evidently in as hot pursuit after the good things of this world, as if they had never heard of objects more valuable, or of a world to come, where neither the riches nor honours of this world are admissible. It is strange to observe, that some, who profess to have heaven and an eternity of glory as the ultimate objects of their attention, should be as deeply immersed in the cares of life, as those who never heard of the adorable Jesus, and salvation by his atoning blood! Yet so it is, they will rise early, sit up late, eat the bread of carefulness, and upon no account whatever miss an opportunity of getting, and still profess to have no

continuing city here, but to be pilgrims and sojourners on earth, as our fathers were, seeking a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is the Lord.

Other still profess the firmest attachment to divine truth, the most full persuasion of their personal interests in the blessings of new covenant grace, who, notwithstanding, can very cordially join in the company of mockers, and men of this world, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame. Such you will find seated where only the scorner should sit, and standing where sinners assemble, without bringing the least degree of uneasiness on their own consciences, or once suspecting that they do wrong. Having utterly forgot, Jam. iv. 4. "that friendship with the world is enmity against God;" that we cannot take fire (Prov. vi. 27.) into our bosom without being burnt, or touch pitch without defilement. "These are spots (Jude 12.) in our solemn feasts (as Jude saith); clouds without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth (yea), without fruit." These are not only useless members, but really injurious, more to be guarded against than those that are without; seeing an enemy in our own camp, who holds correspondence with our enemies, is by far more dangerous to our interest than numbers of avowed enemies. And churches ought to guard especially against such persons, if they would stand firm, rather than against notorious opposers. Our vines are sooner spoiled by little foxes than by great leviathans; and the cause of Jesus suffers more from things, by some deemed trivial, than by all the notorious sins and oppositions of the day.

Some, indeed, are daring enough, upon being found fault with for their frequenting of taverns and public-houses, at once to exculpate themselves, by laying the blame upon divine providence; alleging, that such is the nature of their business, that they are under a necessity of company-keeping in those interdicted places; and farther, that they can spend an hour or two there, with as little guilt as in their own houses, which, by the way, they would find very difficult to prove. But they ought to consider in the

First place, that the business which cannot be carried on without a direct breach of Christ's laws, is either in itself unlawful, or it is unlawfully managed. If in itself unlawful, it is not of God's ordaining, therefore ought to be laid

aside; if in itself it is a lawful business, and unlawfully managed, care should be taken to rectify what is amiss in our management of it, seeing that all our worldly business ought to be governed to the Redeemer's glory. Nothing is more common in the mouths of drunkards than this excuse; yet nothing is, in truth, more impious, and hath a more direct tendency to dishonour God, and give mankind an unfavourable idea of his moral government of the world. But we may, with young Elihu, be in God's stead, against those impeachers of his righteous ways, and will ask them "Do you allege, that the infinitely holy and just God hath forbidden the drunkards admission into the kingdom of heaven, and at the same time hath, in providence, fixed the station and occupation of a man, such as lay him under an unavoidable necessity of being a drunkard?" Yes, you allege this, when you father your intemperance upon the business in which Providence has fixed you, unless you utterly deny his superintendency over human affairs. This excuse, therefore, is so far from extenuating your guilt, that it actually makes it double what it would have been, without such an impeachment of divine Providence; by adding impiety (not to say blasphemy) to your intemperance. But be not deceived, "drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. vi. 10. If, therefore, a man that is addicted to intemperance, charges his ungodly conduct upon his business, he is, in the strictest sense, a disorderly walker, not to be permitted within a Gospel church; but must be withdrawn from, lest his conduct, as an infection diffuse its baleful influence abroad, and, as a root of bitterness, should defile many. In order for the conviction of offenders of this kind, and the better dealing with them, by the several churches burdened and grieved by their ungodly conduct, I shall consider this subject under the following heads, each of which shall occupy a distinct part or chapter of this Tract.

1. The sin of drunkenness defined.
2. The real malignancy of drunkenness exposed.
3. The danger to which a man is liable when drunk.
4. The censure of drunkards from God's word.
5. The means of reclaiming professors who have fallen into that sin, and the conduct of a church in case of obstinacy.

CHAP. I.

In which the Sin of Drunkenness is defined.

Drunkenness, although a prevailing evil in this our day, in which idleness and dissipation so greatly obtain, is capable of misinterpretation; and one personmay be stigmatized as a drunkard, on account of some overt-act, perhaps of ancient date, who is in truth no such person; whilst another passeth for a very sober man, notwithstanding he drinketh every day more than nature craves, and religion says is enough. A variety of circumstances may concur, to ensnare a man into an act of vice, to which he is by no means addicted; whereas a robust and hale constitution will support a man above the vulgar imputation of that very vice, to which he is constitutionally and habitually addicted. What I aim at is, to shew that one man may be actually intoxicated with liquor, without deserving the ignominious character of a drunkard; whilst another, who is never apparently drunk or intoxicated, is, in fact a drunkard. Particular acts do not enter into, or fix general characters; but a series of the same actions constitute habit, and so fix the character, virtuous or vicious, according to the nature of the actions themselves. There is, perhaps, not such a miser alive, as never performed a generous benevolent action; but one generous benevolent action does not exempt the sordid wretch from the character of miser. So, perhaps, there is no man so truly benevolent, who never in his lifetime was guilty of one oppressive or unjust deed; but one oppressive or unjust act, ought not to prevent the man from being esteemed truly benevolent, if the general tenor of his conduct is such as merit that reputation. In the fixing of characters, the general disposition of the mind and tenor of life, rather than particular or single actions, however overt, are to be regarded; otherwise, some saints of the highest eminence in sacred history must lose their reputation so justly given them by the Holy Ghost, and be branded with infamy injurious and unjust. I shall begin with Noah, and a little trace the story.

That righteous man, having preached to his contempo-

raries for an hundred and twenty years, being saved in the ark from the universal deluge, planted a vineyard, and drank of the juice of the grapes to intoxication; yet could not Noah be denominated a drunkard, as the holy penman recites no repetition of the same evil. Now on the one hand it would be harsh, and beyond the design of the sacred historian, to call Noah a drunkard, because he was once guilty of the sin of drunkenness; so, on the other hand, it is absurd and irrational in those, who live in that more than beastly evil, to plead this instance of that good man's weakness, to quiet their own consciences, and to justify their conduct; seeing, though Noah was overtaken with it as a fault, for which he was censurable, he did not live in it as habitual. Neither will a bare repetition of it fix the character, unless we would account Lot, whose *righteous soul* was grieved for the wickedness of the Sodomites, to pass for a drunkard, which can never be admitted, notwithstanding he was twice so exceedingly intoxicated, that he lay with his own daughters, and knew not what he did. Abraham twice dissembled, yet was he not a dissembler, but the faithful parent of the chosen seed. David was once in his life guilty of notorious adultery, and Jacob of speaking downright falsehood; yet was not the one a liar, nor the other an adulterer. So then, as the recorded failings of the saints are no precedent for our imitation, they are not designed as a subterfuge for ungodly walkers. Yet of the greatest use they may be, to a poor broken-hearted sincere believer, who by the force of corruption, hath yielded to temptation; and from his conscious lapse, writes the most bitter things against himself. To see that some, even of the greatest of saints, have been like to himself ensnared may be a means of keeping him from utter despair, into which he must unavoidably fall, were he left to conclude, that no such spots as his, were ever found upon the character of any of God's dear children. But what has the habitual sinner to do with this? He is under no such concern, and those melancholy instances can be of no such use to him. By the way, a man may be a daily impenitent offender, where his sin never becomes so notorious, as those failings of God's children above referred to.

There is Potitio, a gentleman of a facetious turn of mind, whose company is courted by people of superior rank. He

seldom spends an evening at home in his own family, nor indulgeth his amiable spouse with his company till eleven or twelve at night; so that the sweetest endearments of the conjugal state, and family economy, are but little known under his roof. Yet does he never come home drunk. Blessed with a sound habit of body, he can tarry long at the wine without being intoxicated, and is so mighty to drink strong drink, that he will drink as much as would make three ordinary men to reel, without depriving himself of the use of his faculties, his eyes or his limbs. And because he can walk soberly home, after he has sent his companions staggering away, he blesseth himself in his virtue, and can boast that he never was drunk in his life. That this should be the case with Potitio, is not very strange, seeing he makes little profession of regard to objects superior to sensual gratifications: but that people who profess to have a God to adore, a Saviour to follow, and an eternity in view, should indulge to the same degree of intemperance, and justify their conduct in so doing, is not so safely accounted for. Nor is it easy to say, how they can persuade themselves that they can spend an evening in a tavern or alehouse, once or twice a week, as innocently as in their own houses amongst their families. But if possible to convince men, that they may be in the eye of God's righteous law strictly and properly drunkards, without being so much as once intoxicated with liquor, I would have it observed.

1. That all things which have not some tendency, either directly or more remotely to glorify God, must undeniably be deemed sinful. "Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we are called to do it to the glory of God;" which shews, that there is a drinking to the dishonour of God. Every thing that tends to the glory of God, we are capable of imploring the divine blessing upon, which I think we cannot do upon things that either directly or consequentially tend to his dishonour. Conscience, so far as enlightened, is a faithful monitor, and will give a direct answer to our interrogatories. Let those, therefore, who plead for the innocence of spending time at those places, lay their hands upon their hearts and kneel down, if they can, and ask the divine blessing upon what they are going about; or let them cease to justify that upon which they cannot in con-

science implore the divine blessing. Perhaps this is the nearest way of distinguishing to ourselves between things lawful and unlawful; and a way which, if attended to, would discover many things to be unlawful which are pleaded for as indifferent.

Much waste of precious time may be made over the cup, when there is not the least appearance of intoxication; time which ought to be improved in the counting-house, or shop, in the closet, or in the family. And can that be sinless, which is such a murderer of time, so precious in the eye of a death-bed? In short, all drinking, which unfits the mind for the closest examination of its frame and actings, that hinders meditation, indisposeth for the most spiritual duty in the church, in the family, or in the closet; unfits for, or puts family worship any way out of course, is sinful drinking, and to be ranked under the head of drunkenness.

2. A man may, by drinking without being intoxicated, be of very great injury to the cause and interest of religion. People of the world naturally form their opinion of religion itself, from the conduct of its professors. Therefore all drinking that tends to grieve the godly, and to bring the church of Jesus into trouble, is sinful drinking, or drunkenness. A man may be persuaded that such a thing is lawful, in itself, to him; but if his being found in that thing, whatever it be, tends to grieve but one, and that of the weakest members of the church, it becomes unlawful to him; as the Holy Ghost hath left us no toleration to grieve even a weak brother: no, not even in things the most indifferent. It was lawful for Paul to eat flesh, as often as he had occasion; but rather than offend one brother, he would eat no flesh whilst the world stood. How much more ought one professor to abstain from alehouses and taverns, when others are thereby offended? Besides, to advert to what was said before, people of the world form their opinion of religion itself, from the conduct of its professors. It must be awfully sinful, when any part of our conduct gives unto a poor sinner a false notion of the strictness of religion, as if it could bear with the practice of drinking, and frequenting of public-houses, or in anywise connive at the abuse of the mercies of God, all of which are to be used with thankfulness and prayer. Who

that loves Jesus, will attempt to justify that conduct, which tends to harden a poor sinner, and make him tenfold more a child of the Devil than he was before? Yet such a tendency has the conduct of those professors, who frequent taverns and alehouses, and therefore notoriously scandalous and sinful.

The professor of Christianity cannot conform to the maxims of the world, without proportionably to the said conformity, confirming worldlings in their sinful courses, by the countenance which he gives them. But how much more honourable is it, to seek after the welfare of our poor fellow-sinners, by doing what we can, to be instrumental of saving them from that perdition to which the world is destined?

To confirm my leading position, namely, that a man may be a drunkard without ever being intoxicated, I would have it observed, that in 1 Kings xx. 16, we read, that, "Benhadad was drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the thirty and two kings that helped him." Which words, in the plainest manner, exhibit a charge of drunkenness against Benhadad; yet that he retained the use both of his reason and limbs, and was not what some of our refiners consider as a being drunk, is clear from ver. 20, "And Benhadad, king of Syria, escaped on a horse with the horsemen." He had the use of his reason, being sensible of his danger, and choosing the most rational and likely means of safety. He was capable of fleeing on horseback, and consequently of walking on foot, as upright as those who, after their tarrying long at the wine, boast of the steadiness of their walk; yet the Holy Ghost says he was drinking himself *drunk*. It will avail but little what a man says in his own vindication, if the word of God sets him down as a drunkard. Tarrying long at the wine, and being mighty to drink strong drink, fall as immediately under censure and admonition, as to be intoxicated. And certainly if drinking, in the manner above described, is sinful and censurable, he that indulges to intoxication, has no right to lenity and forbearance. Neither can he be tolerated within a Christian church, seeing drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven.

CHAP. II.

In which is shewn the exceeding sinfulness of the Sin of Drunkenness.

HAVING shewn in the preceding chapter, what we are to understand by drunkenness, I go on to shew in this the heinous aggravation attending it, and the impossibility of a person being addicted to it, without injuring both himself and others.

1. The drunkard of every stage greatly injures himself, if we may give credit to Solomon's testimony, Prov. xxiii. 29, &c. "Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright; at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold a strange woman, and thine heart shall utter perverse things." Here is a train of evils which necessarily proceed from drunkenness, or tarrying long at the wine, which terms are synonymous in the sense of Scripture, both of them productive of future remorse, unless hardened to all sense of sin, shame, and folly. Redness of eyes, proceeding from the inflammation of the blood, through the fermentation of abused liquors, designed for a blessing and not for a curse to mankind; as a restorative to oppressed spirits, and not as fuel to inflame the blood.

What evils proceed from excessive drinking, let the gouty, the hectic or hypochondriacal, the consumptive, the paralytic, and apoplectic say, for they have experienced it. Though I deny not that these diseases may invade even a temperate person; it may, perhaps, be found, that some people, who deem themselves very temperate, may be chargeable with ruining their own constitution, and bringing those diseases upon themselves. Some people are so regular, that at no time do they in the least disguise themselves with any liquor; yet they drink, in their regular

way of living, what is sufficient to maintain a febrile motion constantly in the blood; a motion, than which nothing preys more upon the constitution, relaxes the nerves, and unhinges the whole frame of nature. A febrile state, which, according to our best physicians, if not duly attended to, threatens the most fatal and destructive disorders. This same little fever upon the spirits, when its cure is attempted, strictly prohibits the use of all fermented liquors, and indicates balsamic and nutritive broths, which evidently shews that the origin of the disease is the *too plentiful use of them*, although the physician is prudent enough not to shock the delicacy of his patient, by such a mortifying discovery.

But as this discourse is professedly moral, and not physical, I return to my plan of discovering, how injurious the sin of drunkenness is to the party himself. And whatever bad effects it may produce upon the body, those effects are at least equalled by the situation of the mind. What mind, possessed of the least degree of sentiment, can bear, without a great degree of painful mortification, to take a retrospective view of his impertinent babble in his over-night cups? How thoughtful are his mornings, and how disagreeable his reflections, unless he is become absolutely sottish, and has drank away his senses. The disorder which the use of strong drink brings upon the body, naturally tends to fetter and stupify the soul, which can act only according to the position in which the bodily organs are for the time being, which is the true reason why people will do those things, when inflamed with wine or strong drink, which they would be ashamed of at another time.——Therefore Solomon says, "that thine eye shall behold a strange woman, and thine heart shall utter perverse things." And is it not a pity, by sensual gratification, to deprive the only conscious part of man the power of acting? Is it not sinful to fetter the most illustrious part of the human creation which the most high God ennobled with his own immaculate image?

But it is also an abuse of the mercies of a gracious God; one glutton or drunkard will devour more in wasteful abuse, than would serve to make many comfortable. What pity is it that men and women should indulge to intemperance, when many of their fellow-creatures cannot get a

sufficiency of bread to eat, or raiment! To see one of God's creatures wallowing in luxury, whilst another is perishing for want, gives us but a very unfavourable idea of human benevolence. Awful will that audit be, to which our men of affluence will soon be summoned; and tremendous their reckoning with inflexible justice. But they must abide by it, and undergo the irrevocable sentence. To have mercies poured in upon one, and those very mercies by a vicious appetite abused, and turned into so many curses, yields something horrid on the reflection. Yet this is the case of the drunkard, whether more notorious or open, or more secret and sly. Divine providence hath put into his hands the means of living comfortably, and by the perversion of those very means he is unhappy himself, and makes all around him equally unhappy. In this sense, therefore, he fights against God, and does what he can to render abortive the gracious designs of holy Providence. But,

2. Admitting that a professor of religion is addicted to that vice of drunkenness, he his injurious in a very high degree; and this age is rife of such scandalous professors, to the great grief of the few who keep their garments clean in the streets of our *Sardis*. Such a one is injurious to his family, to his creditors, to the church to which he belongs; justly meriteth to be cast out into the world, and held as a heathen man and a publican. Instead of being the parent, protector, and provider for his family, he acts in every sense as their enemy. What a dreadful example does he set his children, instead of going out and in before them in the fear of the Lord! Instead of being a blessing to them, stirring them up to the love of virtue by the amiableness of his own conversation, he is a snare to them by his filthy and beastly example. It is better to be descended from a Hottentot than from such a professor, whose conduct must, if grace prevent not, inspire his offspring with the most disagreeable idea of religion and virtue. How different is the conduct of such a one, from the tenor of that command, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Young ones are very attentive to the conduct of their parents, and even in the earliest dawn of reason, form from it the most striking conclusions. If we wish well to the fruit of our bodies, we have need to be careful of our conduct; and especially

under a profession of religion. But, besides the injury done to their morals, he injures them in their property, and is less capable of providing for them; therefore he himself proportionably vergeth towards the character of an infidel. How awful is the conduct of that parent, who by mere sensual indulgence of his own filthy appetite, neglects the proper education of his children, and guzzles down that which seemed to be designed in Providence to make them happy and comfortable in life! Let the drunkard reflect for a moment, on a wife sitting at home solitary and mournful, deprived of social intercourse with the husband of her choice; children untaught, ungoverned, and perhaps unprovided for, and there read the disagreeable effects of his intemperance. His business neglected, in proportion to his intemperance, and his creditors or family defrauded, in an equal proportion to his neglect of business, and unnecessary expense, plainly shew, that the drunkard is, in the strictest sense, a dishonest man, and no suitable member of a Christian community. Let it be farther observed, that both the church, and the world, expect that the conduct of professors should be, in some goodly measure, different from that of those who make no profession of religion at all; and that, although the families of heathens call not on the name of the Lord, it is expected to be otherwise with such as profess to be followers of the Lamb; more especially with those who are members of the Gospel churches. But how is it that the duties of family religion can be attended to, by those who delight to tarry long at the wine? The hour is commonly unseasonable, and fatigue depresseth the spirits in such a manner, that little relish for, or pleasure in the duty can be experienced; the family, half asleep, rather yawn out their prayers, than worship God in spirit and in truth. What an unsavoury and unseasonable spirit for the worship of God must that person be under, who is just come from the impertinent babble of alehouse and tavern politicians! Yet this is the case with loose professors; either the worship of God in the family is altogether neglected, or thus slightly and carnally performed, in such a manner, as is very unlikely to yield edification to any.

And if the family thus suffer, the community to which he belongs is not less a sufferer. Here is no tasting of the spirituality of his gifts, no exerting of himself for Zion's

prosperity. He puts it out of his power to contribute towards the support of the Gospel, or the relief of the poor, both of which are the duty of every member of a Gospel church. Instead of being a useful member, he becomes as a dead weight upon the community. If all were thus to act, what would become of the Lord's poor, and of a preached Gospel? The poor might starve, and the cause of religion sink into nothing. But I said, that such a one becomes a dead weight to the church to which he belongs, so long as he is suffered to continue in it; which is very apparent, as he not only does no good, but much hurt among the members. He is a contagious person, who spreads infection wherever he comes; the more serious and pious are under restraints in his presence; the less guarded are in danger of being corrupted by his example, and drawn into the same uncleanness of conversation with him. His conduct is usually known abroad, before the church becomes acquainted with it; sinners are hardened, the weak are stumbled, and the reputation of the community is wounded, perhaps before the matter comes to their knowledge; and thus a long train of evils necessarily arise from the lust of intemperance. Is there one man, of the least degree of seriousness, who, if convinced of the evil of intemperate drinking, would not rather birdle his appetite, than be the cause of so numerous and so threatening evils?

CHAP. III.

Which discovers the Danger to which a Man is exposed when drunk, and the censure of Drunkards from the Word of God.

I FREELY confess, that I have but little hope of being able to say any thing on this subject, which will serve to reclaim those, who are actually addicted to the sin of drunkenness. But this does not discourage me, seeing there is a probability of something being said, which may be as an antidote against that horrid evil to others, who, although not as yet ensnared, are exposed to the temptation; and if so, I have my reward. Let the reader dili-

gently consider the substance of the former chapter, and also the farther representation of the dangers contained in this, and let him say, if there is not a call for him *to watch and be sober*.

1. A man's judgment is liable to be misled when his body is inflamed with liquor; as, Isa. xxviii. 7. "They also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink, they err in vision, they stumble in judgment." This account of the drunkards of Ephraim is pertinent and striking; all ranks of people are charged with it. Those that sit in judgment, whom it behoved to have the clearest ideas, and the most perfect use of their reason, in order to dispense judgment and equity. Those who turned the battle in the gate. The soldiers and men of war; the bulwarks of the nation, and guardians of its laws and immunities, sacred and civil. The prophet and the priest, whose office it was to make atonement and intercession for the people, and instruct them in things appertaining to the kingdom of heaven. But does not common experience shew, that the heat of liquor will cause as great a confusion of ideas, as the delirium in a high fever will do? Hence that adage, "The drunken man is a mad man," incapable of forming a true idea of objects; therefore a wise man will not reprove a drunkard, whilst yet in his cups, lest he get himself a blot, but will wait till he is sober; *i. e.* till he regains the exercise of his reason, which was impaired in proportion to the degree of inflammation occasioned by his intemperance.

2. He is in danger of betraying his inward insanity, by the folly of his words. The wise man foretels that "the lips of the drunkard shall utter perverse things;" which was true of Nabel, when David's messenger came to him in a suppliant manner. "Who is David? And who is the son of Jesse?" said he, exactly like the blustering of a drunken man. Had he been sober, he would probably have framed a peaceable answer, even if he denied David's request, and not have exposed himself to the resentment of such a hero, as he must needs know the son of Jesse to be; as is clear from the aspersion cast upon him, as one who had broken away from his master. But would a man

so covetous as Nabal was, with all his churlishness, had he enjoyed the right use of his reason, have broken through every rule of sound policy, by offending a man who had it in his power to ruin at once all his possessions? How many have in their cups uttered such treasonable words, as have afterwards exposed them to the severe penalty of the law, in such cases provided! And even when nothing materially criminal is uttered, what impertinent babble is there heard in a company of drunkards! There you will find patriots, statesmen, men of all sciences, deep skilled in every mystery; and in truth, every thing is to be found among them besides virtue and Christianity, which have long fled the society of drunkards.

3. The drunkard is in danger of bad and vicious actions; "Thine eye shall see a strange woman," saith Solomon to the man who abides long at the wine. And I think this we may venture to affirm, that if Noah had never been intoxicated, his nakedness had never been discovered, nor he had the pain of denouncing the curse upon his own seed. Neither had Lot stained his reputation, by lying with his own daughters, had he not first been made drunk through their subtility. Said Satan once, as some report, to a man in his power, choose thee which thou wilt, murder a man; lie with thy neighbour's wife; or get drunk. The poor man chose to get drunk, supposing it the least criminal of the three. But when inflamed with liquor, he went and lay with his neighbour's wife, was caught by the husband in the act of adultery, and to cover his infmay, plunged his dagger into the heart of the injured man; and was thus guilty of all that Satan proposed to him at the first. Iniquity in general is like the breaking in of water; you see the beginning of it, but cannot tell where it will end. And some sins (such as drunkenness) have many evils implied in them. And difficult it is to say, what a man is not capable of when he is drunk. It was a scandal, such as will never be purged from that university, which, when one of his members was convicted of infidelity, alleged in his excuse, that he was drunk when he uttered the words; seeing it ought to have been deemed a heinous aggravation of his guilt.

4. If a man hath enemies, and I know not who is without, he is exposed to their rage when in any wise intoxicated. Benhadad was drinking himself drunk with the

kings in his pavilions, when the young men of the princes of the provinces of Israel came upon the Syrian hosts, and smote them. Being taken up with his wine and his company, he and his army fell an easy prey to the Israelites, the discipline of his troops having been neglected. The drunkard hath no care. This particular circumstance was, no doubt, recorded, with a view to teach the miserable defenceless situation of that man who is intoxicated with liquor. And it ought to be observed as a beacon, to warn all men against a practice so pernicious.

Elah, the son of Baasha, king of Israel, was drinking himself drunk in his steward's house at Tirzah, when Zimri his captain rose up against him and slew him; which might not have happened, if the king's drunkenness had not furnished opportunity for perpetrating the horrid deed. How many in our day expose themselves to the attack of robbers, merely by their staying long at the wine; a melancholy instance we had but very lately, in the untimely death of two tradesmen, in the suburbs of the city, by the hands of ruffians, who have now satisfied the law with their lives. Those that are attentive to the disorders of the times, must needs see, that this is an evil attended with the most fatal consequences to those who follow it: and what is still more melancholy, is the rapid progress which it makes, in subduing both sexes of Britons, both of superior and inferior rank;—a progress which threatens the most dismal catastrophe, unless prevented by a spirit of reformation poured down from on high upon us as a people. Unless this happy change should take place, we have all the reason in the world to expect, that the woe denounced against the drunkards of Ephraim, may fall in the most tremendous manner upon the drunkards of Britain. For although vengeance tarry, let the drunkard assure himself that his damnation sleepeth not. As is apparent,

5. From the censure which the word of God denounces against them in general. *First*, They are threatened with poverty; Prov. xxiii. 20, 21. "Be not amongst winebibbers, amongst riotous eaters of flesh; for the drunkard and glutton shall come to poverty." And no wonder if we see this threatening so frequently verified, when, to gratify a base and devouring appetite, people are at so much pains to destroy their only preservative from poverty. The

waste of wine, neglect of business, and accumulated expense, implied in drunkenness, shew now naturally poverty is consequent upon it. How many families have we seen reduced to the greatest penury, by the improvidence and profuse expenses of some men and women, whose proper business ought to have been, to provide for their dependants things honest in the sight of all men. *Secondly*, There is a woe denounced against drunkards in general. "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, that wine inflame them!" Isa. v. 11. And ver. 22. "Woe unto men that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink!" Compared with Amos vi. 1—6. "Woe to them that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with chief anointments; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph!" Both compared with Hab. ii. 15. "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also (*i. e.* as well as thyself), that thou mayest look on his nakedness!" From all which we may see, in what esteem the drunkard stands with an infinitely holy God; and the certainty, as well as propriety of his exclusion from the kingdom of God. And, oh, sirs! if God denounce a woe, who is he that can repeal the dreadful sentence, and exempt the drunkard from the fierceness of his wrath? Hath the Lord spoken, and will he not do it? Hath he stretched forth his hand, and will he pull it back without executing his great designs? His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. His counsel condemns, and his pleasure is to cut off the impenitent drunkard. Deut. xxix. 19, 20. "The anger of the Lord, and his jealousy, shall smoke against that man who is a drunkard; and all the curses written in this book shall lie upon him, and Jehovah shall blot out his name from under heaven." Little does the drunkard reflect, that the wine, which his intemperance devours, is as so much oil cast into the flame of divine wrath, already kindled as a stream of brimstone to devour him. Little does he consider to what end his licentious courses bear, that he is only treasuring up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath, and righteous judgment of God, who is no respecter of persons; no conniver at iniquity: and with whom no unrenewed impenitent sinner can dwell.

The laws of man are, indeed, partial in favour of drunkards: and whilst a miserable, half-starving wretch is adjudged to the gallows, for forcibly taking the smallest matter on the highway, the drunkard may rob his family of their all, without incurring any legal penalty. But the law of God lets not the villain pass with impunity, but adjudgeth him to death; Deut. xxi. 20, 21. "And they (namely the father and mother) shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice, he is a glutton and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die." The crimes laid to his charge were not murder, highway robberies, or burglaries; but disobedience to his parents, gluttony or riot, and drunkenness. Attend to his judgment, ye who are guilty of the same crimes. The law of God adjudges you to death, however little ye lay it to heart. Think what heart-wringing anguish your parents must endure upon your account, if called upon by the laws of the land, as well as by the law of God, to accuse and witness against you. But remember, if they do it not now, they will witness against you hereafter, at a higher and more awful tribunal, from which there is no appeal. The death to which the unhappy young man was doomed, was to be stoned by all the men of the city, to testify their abhorrence of his crime, and to purge themselves of his guilt. Remember it, O young man, that God and all good men have thy ungodly conversation in the same abhorrence, and thou hast the same God to appear before, and to thy sad experience thou shalt find, that drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

CHAP. IV.

Which considers the Conduct of a Gospel Church towards one who is called a Brother, on his being guilty of this Wickedness.

THE churches of Jesus being composed of men, who are liable to sleep, it is nothing strange nor new, that the enemy, taking advantage of their weakness, should sow his tares upon our field; and that they should continue for a time

amongst the principal wheat undiscovered. Neither is it any more disgrace to a Gospel church in our day, to have among them a person, whose principles and conduct are diametrically opposite to the integrity of a Gospel spirit, than it was to the Lord's immediate disciples, that Judas was of their number; unless they, indeed, should connive at the wickedness perpetrated by such a one. Then they become, to all intents and purposes, partakers with him in his guilt, and shall share too in his punishment. It is never expected, that the members of a church can search the heart, and therefore they can never be blameable in admitting members, who afterwards may appear to have been unsound; providing they used every likely means to be satisfied of his integrity, before his admission; which a church, studious of its own peace and prosperity, will not fail to do. Even the apostolic churches, to some of the members of which was given the gift of discerning spirits, were not exempted from imposition of this kind; seeing one apostle complains of some who had crept unawares into the church: and another complains of some who had gone out from among them, because they were not of them; for doubtless, saith he, had they been of us, they would have continued with us. But because some hypocrites have got into the apostolic church, would it not be an intolerable abuse to censure all its members as hypocrites? And it is no less absurd to charge the members of any Gospel church with delinquency, upon any one or more of its members being convicted of a particular evil. Because Peter denied the Lord who bought him, must James and John be charged with the same denial; or, because Demas turned aside after filthy lucre, must it thence follow, that Paul and Barnabas turned aside also? In short, a church can never be charged with the guilt of individual members, till it actually winks or connives at the evil of such a one's conduct. Then, indeed, the guilt is transferred from the individual to the general body; at least they become partakers with him in his sin.

But how shall a church proceed in case of one of its members being justly charged with the sin of drunkenness? To answer this question, I would observe, that there are three things, for which, as ends, church discipline in general, and censure in particular, are instituted—the honour

of the church—the credit of religion, and glory of Christ —the restoration of the fallen brother. That part of discipline which tends not to these ends, is not of scriptural institution, therefore to be rejected as spurious. The honour of the church, and credit of religion, will at first view, seem to call for an immediate seperation from the person guilty of drunkenness; and, as a warrant for this instant separation, the words of the apostle, "He that sins before all, rebuke before all;" will be adduced. If a man is actually separated from the church, he is cast out into the world, and become to the church as a heathen man and a publican. Which seems to be more than the apostle meant, by *rebuking him before all.* Nothing can be more plain, than that the notoriety of the sin of drunkenness, calls for immediate and public rebuke: but that every act of this kind does not call for an immediate separation, I hope to make appear.

1. The ultimate end of all true discipline in a church, is to recover the fallen brother out of the snare of the devil; and in this the glory of Christ, who hates putting away, consists more than in cutting off. It hath been observed by some grieved brethren, that the conduct of churches towards supposed delinquents, rather indicates a desire to be freed from the trouble of them, than any endeavour to reclaim and restore them; which, if true, betrays a spirit which I would not wish to prosper, were I even concerned in it. When actually cut off from a community, that person is no longer an object of the church's care, and consequently no attempts are made towards his recovery and restoration, but he is as a heathen man and a publican; disregarded till he himself shall make some overture towards his reconciliation with the church which cut him off. And thus the leading design of church discipline is prevented or perverted.

2. From all that I am able to learn, there is a degree of censure appointed for certain offenders, which is short of an actual separation, or excommunication, as in 2 Thess. iii. 14, 15. "If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed; yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." Here the disobedient person was to stand in the relation of a brother, and as such to

be admonished; not to be accounted as a heathen man, and publican, or an enemy to the church and people of God. Yet although he was still to be treated as a brother, they are forbidden to keep him company; and if forbid to keep him company in common, much more to communicate with him at the table of the Lord, or to admit him to the highest degree of church fellowship. In like manner, 1 Cor. v. 11. "But now have I written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one no not to eat." Here again, to eat either in common or in church communion, with a brother that is called a drunkard, is forbidden; and therefore, although he may for a time retain the relation of a brother, is not to be admitted to the table of the Lord, till, by his repentance, he is purged from his scandal.

3. Admonition in such cases has by some been thought unwarrantable, supposing that it is enjoined only in the case of a heretic, who, after the first and second admonition, we are commanded to reject. It is in this case, *expressly instituted*, and it is in no case forbidden; therefore it can never be unseasonable, if dispensed in a Gospel spirit, with a single eye to the Redeemer's glory. Besides this forbearance in the church, and study by seasonable admonition, to rescue a fallen brother out of the snare of the devil, is most like to the conduct of Jesus in the parable, who would not cut down the barren fig-tree, till he had digged and dunged about it, to see if it would bring forth fruit. But church admonition is expressly enjoined in *cases of disorderly walking*, as well as in cases of *heresy* in the above cited 2 Thess. iii. 15. And consequently fixes a standing rule for the conduct of a church in every case of disorder. Such a rule as is perfectly consistent with the nature of a Gospel church, and by their refusing to eat, or accompany with a disorderly brother, the church maintains its own honour, bears a testimony against the offender's sin, and shews that holiness only can become the house of the Lord: whilst, at the same time, they manifest bowels of mercy towards the party, by admonishing him as a brother. Only by the observance of this rule, a church can be said to distinguish between the person of a fallen bro-

ther, and the sin into which he hath fallen. Let every Christian community bear their warmest testimony against sin of every kind, but let them never forget, that restoration is the leading object they ought to keep in view.

4. Notwithstanding a church of Christ hath no warrant to proceed farther at first, than to withdraw in point of communion at the Lord's table, and in respect to all unnecessary society with an offender; yet, so as to lay him under admonition as a brother, it may become necessary that an actual separation, cutting off, or excommunication should take place; the obstinate apostate be cast forth into the world, the kingdom of Satan, and the relation between him and the church entirely dissolved. If after digging and dunging about it, the fig-tree still continues barren, it must be cut down and cast out of the vineyard. But this cannot be done, but in case of obstinate and impenitent continuance in an evil, for which the party has been duly admonished, and called to repentance. In such a case, a bare withdrawing from him, as a disorderly walker, is not an adequate censure; as he now assumes a different character, and becomes a troubler of the church, and therefore is to be cut off. Such a one continuing obstinately impenitent, under church admonitions, either professeth or professeth not faith: if he professeth not faith, he is to be cut off, or cast out as an infidel; if he does profess faith, and yet continues in his sin, he holds the faith in an evil, or guilty conscience, and as such, ought to be delivered unto Satan, i. e. cast out into the world over which Satan presides. He doth not hear the church, and therefore is to be dealt with as a heathen man and a publican.

5. If admonition has the desired effect, and our fallen brother is made sensible of his sin, what shall we do? The case is plain. The Lord hath blessed the discipline of his house, and given repentance to him that sinned. That very repentance is a proof of his God having received him; and shall any false notions of the honour of the church induce us to reject him whom God hath received. No, if thy brother repent, let his sin have been ever so notorious, and turn to thee by confession and repentance, thou shalt in any wise forgive him. Are we not to wait and see whether his repentance is abiding; and is it not prudent to stay till his scandal is purged by a course of well

doing, before he is restored to his place? This is, indeed, very agreeable to carnal policy, but no way consistent with the word of God. The apostles did not tarry for proof of Peter's repentance, before they acknowledged him as a brother; neither is it lawful for us to doubt the reality of any man's repentance, till future facts shall render it dubious; for only by their fruits are men to be known. To pretend to judge of the sincerity or insincerity of a man's heart, any farther than open facts do make it manifest, approaches too near to the Almighty's province of searching hearts, for us to pretend to it. If a man is sincere in his professions of repentance, his sincerity will discover itself in the holiness of his future conduct; and if insincere, the word of the Lord will soon find him out, and the dog shall return to his vomit, the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire again. The scandal of the offender being purged by repentance, his former sin is with the church, as it is with the church's God, as if it had never been; cast behind their back, never more to be seen or remembered by them.

From all that has been said, we may see, in the

1st place, the aboundings of this so very pernicious evil of drunkenness, and how far it is the duty of every professor to watch against it with sobriety. If we would walk consistent with the Christian profession; if we would act consistently with manhood, it behoves us to watch against all temptations to this horrid, this beastly sin; and at the same time to solicit the protection of that immaculate Being, by whose grace alone we can be upheld in the hour of temptation, and preserved from the evil.

2. The need there is for Gospel churches to watch against all tendency to looseness and levity in its several members, in order to pervent the infection spreading, may also appear evident. When the place of any one is found frequently vacant, it may justly be concluded, that the heart is in a backsliding frame, and that therefore it is expedient to seek after him in time, before the whole soul is alienated from God, like Ephraim's, when in the house of his idols; and his neglect of means has been followed by the prevalency of outward and scandalous sinfulness.

3. If admonition and exhortation prove fruitless, and the delinquent is obstinate in his rebellion, the way of the

church is plain, and expedition in their proceeding is indispensably necessary. A withered member must be a burden to the body whilst it remains; a mortified organ must endanger the whole system: and surely it is better that one member be cut off, than the whole body should perish; as must eventually be the case, if the mortification is not checked by a seasonable amputation, and the servant of sin turned forth into the world, whose maxims he follows with allowance.

THE

CANKER WORM;

OR THE

GOURD OF CREATURE COMFORT WITHERED.

But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.—Jonah, iv. 7.

THE Book of Jonah is one of the most astonishing pieces of ancient history; as instructive as it is marvellous. Some of the very interesting incidents recorded in it, I shall a little point out to my reader; and may that Holy Spirit, by which it was indited, make it life to the souls of both writer and reader. The

First instance which I shall note, is that very awful proof of human depravity, in God's own people, recorded in the case of Jonah. God commanded Jonah "to arise and go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; because the iniquity of its inhabitants was come up to heaven before God," Jon. i. 2. But Jonah, far from obeying the word of the Lord, resolved to secure his own honour, and let God send by whom he would send; though, at the same time, it was at the expense of his conscience, and at the hazard of the divine displeasure. "He knew, that the Lord is gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil denounced," Jon. iv. 2. And he might also, by the spirit of prophecy, foresee, that the Ninevites would repent at his preaching; that of course they should not be destroyed, according to his prophecy; consequently that he should by many be accounted a false prophet. People might have said, "Jonah prophesied the destruction of Nineveh; but see, Nineveh is as flourishing as ever." But this disgrace was insufferable to the unmortified spirit of the prophet; therefore, instead of Nineveh,

he flees to Tarshish, in order to escape the presence of his God.

Even after God had cast him into the depth of the sea, and kept him in close durance in the fish's belly, forced him, as it were, to obey, he could not submit to the merciful conduct of his Maker; but valued his own reputation more than that city, in which were more than six score thousand infants and idiots, who knew not the right hand from the left: even justifies his rebellion, and tells God to his face, that he does well to be angry with his conduct. Yet with all this strong corruption and shameless self-veneration, Jonah knew how to call, even from the belly of hell, in such a manner, as to be heard and regarded in the highest heavens; and whilst imprisoned in the deep to declare that "salvation is only of the Lord," Jon. ii. 9.

2. If Jonah's corruption is so very conspicuous, the mercy of God is yet more so; both as it respects Jonah and the Ninevites. It was, indeed, amazing, that the Almighty did not plunge the rebellious prophet into the ocean of his unalterable displeasure, instead of chastising him in the manner recorded in the history. Instead of chastising him with the whip of paternal anger and fatherly resentment, he did not cast him down amongst the *scorpions* of the bottomless pit. Instead of being entombed for three days and nights in the belly of the fish, he was not for ever buried in unalterable perdition. But the history of Jonah shews, that there is redemption with God, that he may be feared; and mercy for offenders, that their prayer may be encouraged.

Nor was that mercy shewn to the Ninevites on their repentance at the preaching of Jonah less illustrious. For even Jonah, whose good name was so very dear to him, was obliged at last to obey, and preach unto them the preaching he was bidden; and notwithstanding the strength of his corruptions, to cry against Nineveh, that which he very well knew, or at least strongly suspected, would not be fulfilled. He had not gone over more than a third part of the city, before the doleful prophecy reached the court, carrying conviction wherever it was published. All ranks and degrees of men received the word of the Lord, turned from their evil ways, repented in dust, and solemnly fasted before God, with a view to deprecate the threatened judg-

ment, and propitiate the Deity. He beheld their humiliation, he accepted their persons and repentance, and spared Nineveh, that great city, in which were not so few as six score thousand souls, who knew not their right hand from their left; all of whom, with every inhabitant, were by Jonah's preaching doomed to just destruction.

3. We see what absolute obedience God requires of all his prophets and people in general; admitting none of them into his council, or suffering them with impunity to controvert his commandments. Jonah thought, as God was so very mercifully disposed, that it were better not to send such a positive threatening; therefore he did not like that preaching which God had bidden him preach. For his own part, he did not choose to risk his reputation as a prophet, for the sake of Nineveh, had there been double the number of people in it; therefore, if God was resolved to send such a peremptory threatening, it should be by another prophet. But who ever hardened himself against God and prospered? Not Jonah. For God is as peremptory in commanding, as Jonah is in his refusal; and now in this struggle it remains to shew, upon whose side victory declares herself. Jonah is determined not to go with any such preaching, and God is determined that Jonah shall be his messenger to deliver that very message, and no other.

Jonah embarks to flee by sea from the land of Israel; God rides upon a cherub, and on the wings of the wind does fly, in pursuit of the fugitive prophet. The winged gales are not able to convey the vessel so fast, but that it is overtaken by Jehovah in his cloudy chariot, riding velociously in the rapid storm, designed as the messenger of Jonah's arrest. He would needs to sea, to escape from the presence of his God; but he shall now be convinced, that God is the God of the sea, as well as of the dry land; for God will punish him by that in which he put his trust, and meet him in an undesirable manner, where he is least of all expected. The ship in which he sails is arrested, and all the skill of her crew is not sufficient to bring her to a port of safety. To lighten her burden, the cargo is cast overboard; but nothing will appease the raging ocean, till Jonah himself is cast into its deeps. It is done; with fear and solemnity the prophet is cast out at his own request. For Jonah, who but just before would rather let Nineveh

perish, than risk his own reputation; now, touched with a sense of his sin, chooseth rather to die, than this little company should perish on his account, Jon. i. 12—15. Such a difference is there between the disposition of a person when he is, from when he is not, under a humbling sense of his sinfulness.

God prepared a voracious monster of the deep, of what specie I pretend not to say; and to its care he commended his offending prophet, till he should redemand him, which he did at the end of the third day, when this monstrous guardian delivered him again safe into the custody of his God, chap. ii. 10. Jonah, once more brought to see the light of the sun, receives the same peremptory command; "Arise, go unto Nineveh that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee," chap. iii. 2. Having such a recent proof of God's superior power, whatever reluctance he inwardly experienced, he durst not provoke the divine displeasure by a second refusal; therefore he arose, and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord, Jon. iii. 3.

4. This prophecy teaches us, that God's dispensations may vary, and be different from his threatening, without any change taking place in his nature or purpose. Jonah knew very well that it was the purpose of God to have mercy upon offending Nineveh; and that as he could not, consistent with his own honour, shew them mercy without their repentance, his preaching was designed to produce that effect upon them, and bring them to that repentance, which should be the preservation of their city. It is clear from this, that God who sheweth mercy, provided for the Ninevites the means of instruction, and by his own blessing upon the ministry of the word, brought them to that repentance which is acceptable to him, and justifies his perfections in the emanations of his mercy. How foolish and absurd are the lofty votaries for human agency, in adducing this history, to shew that the immutable God doth alter his purposes, as a change passeth on the conduct of his creatures, seeing a change for the better is entirely from himself.

5. We see that God so wisely governs his kingdom, that even in his very punishment of the rebellions of his people, he investeth them with honour; so little is his goodness dependent on human worthiness. Who could have thought,

when the monster swallowed the prophet Jonah, that, in that very transaction, God was making him an eminent type of his Son's burial and resurrection. Such a striking type as the Scriptures record none besides, and honourably quoted by Jesus himself, as his antitype. Astonishing goodness! That Jonah, peevish and fretful Jonah, quarrelsome and rebellious Jonah, should, in the very act and punishment of his rebellion, be made an illustrious type of the Saviour of the world. O grace, how independent art thou! O mercy, how amazing is thy way! Past, infinitely surpassing the utmost reach of human skill. Unsearchable beyond degree are all thy wonderous and mysterious ways. My soul, adore thou the incomprehensible abyss, whence is all thy hope. Wonder and admire, that which eternity itself will leave unfathomed and inadequately expounded. Amazing transit was that of Jonah; from the belly of the sea-born monster, to the throne of the Lamb. Vast was the deliverance; and most astonishing the change. Jonah surely sounds a tuneful harp, and loud proclaims his dear Redeemer's praise: emulous in song, he will suffer none to outdo him in loftiness of strain; none more joyfully to hymn the great Creator. These are some of the general lessons we are taught in this sacred prophecy; I shall now briefly note the contents of the chapter in which my text lies, in order the better to clear the way to my intended subject.

1. We find Jonah exceedingly displeased; very angry indeed at God's merciful conduct towards Nineveh. Strange it is to find such a disposition in a man, as to be angry, very angry, at the preservation of his fellow-creatures. Stranger still, to find it in a saint and servant of God; but strangest of all to find it in a prophet, who most evidently was acquainted with the mind and will of God. This, if any thing will, may shew us, that the old nature, or carnal heart, is enmity against God; and that it is not taken away, neither absolutely subdued, even in real believers.

2. Jonah reasons with God against his merciful conduct towards Nineveh, that great city; and in the heat of his angry impatience, he wants to die. "I know that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better

to die than to live." q. d. Ah, Lord! by shewing mercy to repenting Nineveh, thou hast ruined my reputation for ever. Thou hast robbed me of my good name, the loss of which I cannot survive. It is better to be hid in the grave, than to live and sustain the infamy which this affair has brought upon me. I cannot live to be counted a false prophet.

God rebukes Jonah's impatience in such gentle terms, "Doest thou well to be angry;" that the prophet seems as if he had conceived some hope, that God for his sake might yet destroy the city; therefore he fled from it, and waited the issue in painful suspense. He went out of it to shun the danger, in case his prophecy should be fulfilled, that he himself should not perish in the general destruction; and to avoid the reproach of having prophesied falsely, in case the prediction should not be fulfilled.

He made him a booth, and rested under its shade; and, to make it more comfortable, God covered it with a gourd, which he caused to spring up in a night; and Jonah was exceeding glad because of the gourd: perhaps from this friendly interposition of divine providence in preparing the gourd, gathering fresh hope, that God for his sake would still destroy Nineveh. But as Jonah's grief had been carnal and rebellious, so now his joy was merely sensual, the excess of which it behoved the Almighty to curb; inasmuch as carnal joy is to the full as fatal to the true interests of the Christian, as sinful fretfulness and murmuring. Therefore "God prepared a worm, when the morning was up the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered." It is not my intent either to trouble my serious, or to gratify my curious reader, by inquiring into the immediate, natural, and physical causes of these phenomena; all I aim at in this discourse being a moral improvement of the subject. The doctrine naturally arising from the words, is,

"That as mankind in general are apt, like Jonah, to delight to sit under the shadow of a gourd, God hath very wisely, and in great love, ordained a worm at the root of every gourd of creature delight and comfort; by which means he drives his people to a more excellent dwelling-place, and more certain dependance."

In the opening and illustrating this practical truth, I shall,

I. Point out some things in which people are apt to promise themselves great pleasure and satisfaction; and which, in the event, evidently appear to be no better than Jonah's withered gourd.

II. Shew that there is a canker worm at the root of every gourd, and blasting in every creature delight.

III. Point out a suitable antidote against the poison of this smiting worm.

IV. Draw some inferences from the doctrine.

I. Point out some things in the enjoyment of which people are apt to promise themselves great pleasure and satisfaction; but which, in the end, appear to be in reality of no more use and value to them, than Jonah's gourd was to him; yielding only a gleam of momentary joy. To specify them all, would be both tedious to me and my reader; I shall therefore mention only such as are most obvious and common.

1. Riches must needs have the first place in our catalogue; as most people are of opinion, that could they but attain them, much satisfaction, pleasure, and delight, might be derived from the enjoyment of them; but the contrary has been frequently proved by the event. He that walks on foot, would be much happier could he afford to keep a horse; he that rides on horseback, would still be much more happy could he but afford to ride in his carriage; he that does keep his carriage and pair, with one footman, sees great felicity in a coach and six, and a numerous retinue. He that begins the world upon nothing, would be quite delighted could he but call a few hundreds his own; he who has his hundreds, still sees a great pleasure in being able to call so many thousands his own property; and he that hath his thousands, could he but multiply them by a tenfold proportion, supposes that he should reach the utmost pitch of human happiness. Yet after all, it has never been known, that riches give sleep to the eyes, nor peace to the weary heart; and at best, if trusted in, or in any way unduly regarded, prove but as Jonah's gourd, smitten at the root, and clothed only with withered leaves.

Riches, like the eastern gourd, very often spring up in the night, without any toil or industry of our own, to shew the sovereignty of that divine providence whose it is to make rich, and to make poor. Hence you shall find some,

now flowing in affluence, who but a very little while ago, were hid in obscurity, and surrounded with indigence. And, like the same gourd, we shall see riches frequently perishing in a night. How frequently do we see the fruits of many years' industry, swept away in the shortest space imaginable, to shew that God only is the proper object of human trust and dependance? They are foolish, indeed, who trust more or less to uncertain riches, seeing they make to themselves wings and flee away, and in their flight, like the fugitive Spartans, leave only wounds behind them. My reader may assure himself, that the rustic swain can eat, can sleep, yea, can even die, with as much peace and composure of mind, in his humble cottage, as the most magnificent prince can do in a palace the most superb. And till it can be made apparent, that riches can make the head lie more easily on the dying pillow, it will be difficult to prove, that they are at all, more or less, worthy of the Christian's pursuit. If you deem a perishing gourd matter of exceeding joy, you may rejoice in growing riches with equal, but not with greater, propriety.

2. Some others are as much enamoured with belly delights. Give them but costly viands, and well flavoured wines, they do not very much envy the miser his wealth. The children of Israel, when they got first into the barren desert, thought that they could very well be contented with bread; but when they had obtained bread, such as was never eaten by any other people, they placed their supreme felicity in the obtaining of flesh. Could they but have flesh to eat, they could be as comfortable in the wilderness, as elsewhere. But without it, they could not be happy, as their whole minds run upon eating of flesh. God, in a day of rebuke, gave them flesh till they were gorged with it; flesh that destroyed the fattest of them. The voluptuary, whose god is his belly, and whose glorying is in the relishing sauces, has a worm perpetually gnawing at the root of his gourd. Nature, inadequate to its office, cannot fully complete its concoction of the rich and relishing dishes, with which it was surcharged, before it is gorged afresh with more; insomuch that the voluptuary, although fed with *turtle*, has not half the pleasure of eating at his feast, as the labouring swain enjoys in his bread and cheese, his hung beef, or rusty bacon. Hence arise many of the dis-

orders which attend our flannelled gentlemen, and hysteric ladies. For a long train of diseases, followed up by death itself, constantly await the dwellings of luxury and debauch.

Those gentry may glory, as much as they please, in the richness of their entertainments; but I could wish them to consider, that their life is altogether brutal; and that brutes of a rank inferior to theirs, enjoy more exquisite pleasure in eating and drinking, than the voluptuary in ordinary can possibly do. Just above, I compared the voluptuary to the country rustic, and shewed what advantage the latter has over the former, but I retract the inequitable comparison, as doing dishonour to the honest and healthy swain, to be compared with those belly worshippers; those inviters of ghastly disease. We may find among the brutal ranks, those who may more fitly be compared to this *Beast of Reason;* who, if not lost entirely to common sense, may know that the horse and ass relish their oats, and the very hog his acorns, every whit as well as an alderman does his turtle, and enjoys them with as keen a gust.

3. Some, from whom it hath pleased God to withhold the fruit of the body, are vain enough to suppose, that happiness depends greatly in having children given them; even to suppose, that to be without them, is not so soon to be chosen as death itself; therefore their cry is with Rachel, "Give me children, or else I die." But this does not always answer the parent's expectation; for it may happen, that Rachel, who cannot live without children, may have them given to her, but never live to enjoy them. It was so with the spouse of the patriarch, and it has been so with many others, who, like her, could not live without children, and unto whom the very gratification of their desires was mortal.

Besides, many have lived to enjoy the children for whom they have been so very anxious, but have been very far from having that pleasure in them, with which they might once have flattered themselves. David had but very little pleasure in his beautiful son Absalom; Solomon in Rehoboam; Isaac in Esau; or Abraham in Ishmael. The contrary to the parents' hopes and expectations, very often takes place with respect to children; which ought to make

those to whom they are denied, well satisfied in their circumstances of reputed sterility. Many a parent, who has lived to be the grieved witness of the vicious conduct of his children, not to mention their untimely end, so very shocking to parental feelings, would be truly glad, if it had been the pleasure of God to have wrote them down childless. Yet all these sad and melancholy instances, are not sufficient to restrain parents from forming high expectations from the enjoyment of children. For my own part, I freely confess, that my temptations lie in the contrary extreme, and are as groundless as those I am censuring, barring the general depravity of all human hearts, and the many temptations to which youth are exposed, in such a vicious age as this of our own.

4. Human esteem is another gourd, under which the sons of men are apt to shelter themselves. But he must be very little acquainted with depraved humanity, who can be exceedingly joyful because of this gourd, any more than the former. Had I really the esteem of my contemporaries, that would be no proof at all of my personal merit; for I cannot as yet believe, that the voice of the people is the voice of God; seeing Herod, who had the voice of the people for his divinity, was not deified notwithstanding, but smote with a vermicular disease. Who had ever more esteem than Alexander the Great? And who was ever a greater villain, a greater enemy to Adam's posterity, than that Macedonian madman; mad with ambition and avarice? If the world judged of characters according to their intrinsic merit, it would be worth while to court its approbation; but if the public taste is so vitiated, that a pea is preferred to a pearl, and a pebble to a diamond; if knaves are supported by public applause, and virtue is groaning in chains; if self-seeking villains can outwit public wisdom, and modest piety and worth cannot gain attention; are the suffrages of the public at all to be accounted of by the Christian?

He who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; he who went about continually doing good, and spent his whole life in seeking the welfare of lost sinners, could never obtain the public esteem. If the voice of the public, even the patriotic public, concerning the Redeemer

of mankind, be, "away with him, crucify him, crucify him;" who that loves his immaculate person; who that has cordially taken up his cross with him, would be sanguine about it? Who that has felt the power of his resurrection, and enjoys the fellowship of his sufferings, would depart from the path of known duty, in order to obtain public regard?

What, my friend, if thy name, and the history of thy heroic actions, are not recorded on monumental marble, nor engraven on historic brass, if they stand legible in the annals of heaven, and are recorded in the book of the Lamb; hadst thou now the esteem of the populace, how uncertain its continuance! Nothing more uncertain than the public voice. Those very tongues which now cried out against the Redeemer, "away with him, crucify him, crucify him," were singing to him, but a very little while ago, Hosannah in the highest. The very men, the Lystrians, who were for sacrificing to Paul as a god, not long after stoned him for dead, though their purpose was defeated by his kind Preserver. We might descend to times more modern, and point out an English commoner, who was not only the wonder of Europe, but could do with his own nation what he pleased, within but a short period, sunk so low, as entirely to lose public confidence and esteem. How little then is the voice of the multitude to be regarded? That weathercock multitude, who bestow their praises for they know not what; and for as little reason retract them? Let every believer seek the praise which comes from God, and live above the caprice of human humour. For of human praise it may truly be said, it is often gained without intrinsic merit; therefore seldom long retained; always precarious; got on a sudden, and lost on a sudden.

5. Connexions in social life are as another gourd, under which people are very apt to promise themselves great joy and pleasure: but nothing can be more precarious and uncertain; nothing more fleeting and transitory; yea, nothing more likely to produce effects quite opposite. All the delight arising from these connexions, is likely to be as Jonah's joy, but of short duration. Those whom we have depended upon as the greatest blessing, have often proved the greatest affliction and cross.

Christian people, in communion one with another, are

apt to form themselves into a carnal cabal. So friendly and sociable is this little knot of people, that they can scarcely live a day without each other's company; and so free too, that they must mutually impart the whole of their family concerns unto each other. By these means, they reciprocally put themselves, in a great measure, into each other's power; so that when the difference does happen among them, as happen it will, sooner or later, they are capable of doing the most fatal mischief to each other's reputation; and of being more injurious enemies, than ever they were comfortable friends. This personal friendship is merely carnal, and has no foundation in the Gospel of Jesus; and therefore it is like every thing else which is carnal,—transitory, and of very short duration; in the end fatal to the peace of every party of the cabal. Persons thus linked together must walk very circumspectly, not to give mutual jealousy; for the least degree of uncommon regard let fall upon one, is interpreted a slight put upon another; so that this kind of friendship has a certain affliction inseparably connected with it, and is of that specie of evils, which are their own punishments. Christ would have all who bear his image equally regarded, so far as his image is equally visible upon them; and so far as this rule is departed from, all friendship is of a carnal or worldly nature, and injurious to the kingdom and interest of the Redeemer.

6. Trust in mere outward ordinances, is another gourd, under the shadow of which mankind are prone to act. Man is a reasonable being, and as such he knows that some kind of worship is due to his Creator; but the spirituality of that worship never occurs to his mind, before his heart is affected by the agency of grace. They put on an external shew of godliness, take up a mere form of religion, and rejoice in their own goodness, as Jonah did in his gourd. The formalist is sober and temperate, virtuous and just, and religious too in his own way; for he desires to flee from the wrath to come, like that young Jewish gentleman who came to Jesus, inquiring the way to eternal life; and who, notwithstanding, refused it when explained to him, because it was very opposite to his present interests and inclinations. Under this gourd many sit with joy, as if it were the living vine, until God prepare a worm to

smite its root, so that its leaves become shrivelled, and no longer render their booth comfortable.

This is one of the lying refuges, which the prophet has doomed to destruction; one of the sandy foundations which must be razed, in order to our enjoyment of the Gospel hope. God hath ordained, "that all who kindle a fire, and walk in the light of it, all who compass themselves about with sparks which they have kindled, shall have nothing but anguish of heart," Isa. l. 11. Hence when disease and a death-bed approach, their religion is gone, it yields them no comfort; like the morning cloud, and the early dew, it is passed away, and the soul is destitute of an asylum of safety. What is all the religion of the formalist, but as the hungry man's dream? *He dreams that he eats and drinks.* They dream of doing God good service, and of reaping great advantage from the fruit of their labours. But when the dreamer awakes, his soul is empty, he is faint and hath appetite. So it is with the formalist; when he comes to himself, he finds his soul empty of all that good, of which he once considered himself the subject. What an alarming awakening out of his dream had Paul, that most zealous and most accomplished formalist? How great his surprise, when he found himself, with all the ardour of his zeal, to be fighting against God? That, with all his strict religion, he had never so much as been accounted to pray; but held, as standing on a level with, if not in a more dreadful situation than, the most abandoned miscreant, or the blindest pagan, who never heard of the promised Messiah. Wretched is the hypocrite's hope, which must perish sooner or later. No hope can triumph over the horrors of death and the grave, besides that which has Christ alone for its immoveable foundation; *this* rises to heaven, and is full of immortality; *that* eventually gives place to horror, and everlasting despair.

7. Even Christian people are apt to form too high expectations from their relation to a Gospel church, not considering that it is composed of fallible, imperfect men and women. And hence arise many temptations, doubtings, and questionings in the mind, on discovering imperfections in the conduct of church members. Nay, it may even happen, that relation to a Gospel church, may be so far from lessening, as to increase your trouble; and yet your

abstaining from church fellowship, would by the Scripture be deemed an affront to the Redeemer, and an avoiding of his cross. If every individual was to examine closely into his own imperfection, and place his fellows but on a level with himself, he would see little cause to wonder at all the imperfection which discovers itself in militant churches. And if every member were to expect no more from others, than he thinks may reasonably be expected from himself, he would rather lament the general incapacity to do well, than be offended at any thing which may happen to have been done amiss. But a neglect of these rules is frequently fatal to our own, as well as the peace of others; and therefore an evil, which ought to be guarded against. I shall now,

II. Shew, that at the root of every gourd there is a canker worm, whose envenomed bite smiteth it that it withereth. It was so in the type. Jonah's delight in his gourd could not preserve it from withering: it is universally so in the antitype: God hath prepared a worm at the root of every gourd, having determined that his people shall trust only in himself, as revealed in the Scriptures, as manifested in the flesh of his Son Jesus Christ. And, indeed, what object so fit to be trusted as our good and faithful Creator? Surely he that made us has the best right to our unreserved confidence.

1. Riches, that beautiful and attractive gourd, under the shadow of which most people would be glad to sit, proclaims aloud its own insufficiency, and says, "Happiness is not in me." But the voice is not believed, till its truth is experienced. Contrary to the voice of reason and revelation, people will persuade themselves that much happiness must needs be enjoyed under this gourd; in comparison of what can be enjoyed from under its shadow. What diligent application! What rising early and sitting up late! What posting to and from market, to buy and sell, and get gain, is there amongst mankind. What neglecting of the best things, in order to increase wealth, is to be met with amongst professors. How comfortable would the man be, could he but get his gourd into a condition flourishing enough! But let him have his will, and procure, if it were possible, enough of worldly riches; let his booth be ever so elegant, and his gourd of the finest

verdure, he shall not escape the gnawings of the canker worm.

A secret conviction of neglect of duty, struggling with his anxious care, as a worm, preys upon his vitals, and drinks up his spirits. He is convinced that it is his duty to deal with a liberal hand, in proportion to his increase, but his niggardly heart will not suffer him to obey the heavenly monitor. He is constantly on his watch against being over-reached in trade by day, or robbed by villains in the night. His mind is perpetually on the rack, plodding how to get more, and how effectually to secure to himself what he has gotten. Yet can he not escape certain losses and disappointments that reach his very heart. And besides all this, the melancholy reflection that he shall not live for ever. How great the fall of the rich man, when he drops into the narrow grave! But greater far when he drops into hell.

He that increaseth riches increaseth sorrow, is a proposition but little believed, notwithstanding the doctrine of infallibility. Were it believed, is it possible that men would so eagerly court their own misery? And after they have got both riches and sorrow enough, continue intensely thirsting for more. What wringings of heart does the rich man pass through, when one after another breaks in his debt, and strips him of his property. These are anxieties from which the bosom of the poor man is exempted: sorrows reserved solely to men of property, and from which very few, if any, of that character are exempted. Wise and becoming was Agur's singular petition, equally deprecating both riches and poverty, because equally dangerous to mental peace, and personal integrity. But how few ingenuously tread the footsteps of that pious man, and discover the same holy contempt of earthly riches? That they profit not in the day of wrath, we readily assent to in our judgment; but our affections and practice are apt to maintain a constant war with our understanding in this respect; so that the Christian man is frequently a contradiction to himself.

2. If a person is indeed so mean, so contemptible, and brutal, as to place his delight in eating and drinking, he shall be sure to find a worm at the root of his gourd; such a worm as shall be like wormwood mixed with his dearest

delights, and as bad as the gall of asps, envenoming his choicest pleasures. His taste will become so vitiated, that he can seldom have satisfaction in what he does enjoy, and will be constantly pining after something which he cannot compass; or what he has, shall lack of the relish which he wished it to be attended with. The fault, which lies in the deprivation of his own taste, will be laid on the cook; and the epicurean shall rarely, if at all, have the pleasure of eating so as to gratify a healthy hunger. As a certain writer says, "Such people press nature with over-weighty burdens at once; and before she has had time to finish her business of concoction, they load the stomach afresh; so that squeamishness is sure to ensue. Then they flee to the dram bottle, to keep down the rising fumes, and help nature to do her work; being in herself inadequate to the task imposed on her."* Besides, the vast train of diseases which arise from intemperance, which must make the life of the voluptuary a burden to himself, and the inactivity for business which is necessarily consequent upon it, must expose him, if not past feeling, to the perpetual gripings of an uneasy conscience.

3. Should the fruit of the body be granted, to satisfy an inordinate desire for procreation, it may not happen that children are given for the parent's comfort, or the fruit of the body for his lasting pleasure. Rachel cannot live unless she has children; but when God gives her her desire, she cannot live to enjoy them. Rachel dies as soon as Benjamin is born; and he, instead of being the son of her pleasure, proves the son of her sorrow, Ben-oni. Abraham, who had so long waited for children, had but little comfort in his Ishmael, the son of the bond-woman. Isaac and Rebekah were weary of their lives, because of Esau's connexion with the daughters of Heth. David had a numerous family of children, but in few of them he had the comfort of a parent. Disorders reigned amongst them. Uncleanness, ambition, and murder, greatly obtained, and made awful inroads amongst the children of the king. What care for their welfare! What fear for their miscarriage! And what real affliction for their actual misconduct, do frequently tear the bosom of the thinking parent! Enough at least to shew, that true satisfaction is not to be had under

* Sir Walter Raleigh.

this gourd; and that he who has high expectations from his children, is in great danger of being miserably disappointed. Not to mention the most grievous distress which some parents fall under, through the stubbornness, rebellion, and loose profligate conduct of their children, which brings down their gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. In this sense many children, instead of being a comfort to them, are actually the murderers of their parents. On the whole, I think, common observation will warrant me to conclude, that our connexions in life yield as much pain and disquiet on one hand, as they do pleasure and delight on the other.

4. The esteem of mankind, whether profane or religious, yields but a very uncomfortable shadow to those who delight in it. It is obtained, perhaps, with great difficulty; and not less difficult to retain. Fleeting and precarious in its nature, often withheld from the man of merit, and conferred on the worthless. Who would value that ill-judging voice, which prefers Barabbas the murderer, to the Saviour of sinners; which caresseth murdering and destructive Saul, whilst it persecutes and punishes the preaching apostle? Had the prophet Jonah been less tenacious of public esteem, he had been more obedient to his God; his name and memory had been transmitted down to posterity in the sacred annals, with far greater advantage and lustre. Were Christian people to be more strict in their inquiries after the will of their God, as revealed in the word, and less cautious about the approbation or disapprobation of the public, their lives would, in general, be proportionably more useful; and their souls would possess a richer experience of that divine peace of God, which passeth all understanding. But an undue regard to the public voice, in matters of religion, is sure to be the parent of error, of leanness and barrenness of soul. As in equal proportion to the credit or discredit we give to human testimony, we honour or dishonour the Redeemer, it cannot be at all thought strange if he send barrenness of soul where he is most dishonoured. Nothing seems more natural; nothing can be more reasonably expected.

5. When people join themselves to a church of Christ, they are apt to form very high, and very unjust expectations; as if the militant church were composed of perfect

and sinless beings, rather than imperfect beings, who in many things offend, and who, in all they do, come short of the glory of God. Hence it happens their disappointment is frequently great; and some people, on the discovery of imperfect conduct in churches, are ready to wish they never had given themselves up as members; not considering the true end of church fellowship. It is an institution designed only for imperfect men and women, and which could in reality be of no use to them had they attained, or were already perfect. He that is perfect can walk alone: he that can walk alone has no need of a companion; and therefore there is a necessity, from the very nature of its constitution, that the believing church should be imperfect in its members; consequently they err exceedingly, who expect perfection from the church below.

It appears not to me, that those who expect to escape trouble by being admitted into church communion, have a right view of the subject. Our leading view ought to be, to receive and impart more liberally, and this will lead to a taking up the cross, even in church communion; and I am either greatly mistaken, or it is there where the cross is principally to be expected, in these days of external peace and legal protection. Nor ought we to think at all strange, that many things should turn up disagreeable from the spirit of Christianity. For were it not so, to what purpose should we be admonished to bear with and to forbear one another. If the conduct of a church, in all its members, were indeed uniformly consistent with the spirit and commands of the adorable Jesus, there would be nothing to bear, no exercise for a forbearing disposition; no exercise for God-like forgiveness.

6. Nor is peace of our own procuring productive of a more salutary shadow to those who sit under it. This, as Ephraim's goodness, is like the morning cloud and early dew which passeth away. Our obedience is praiseworthy, when springing from Gospel motives; but if in any sense the ground of our dependance, it becomes an antichrist, and all the peace derived from it is doomed to destruction.

Young converts in particular, are very apt to place too much dependance on their duties, frames, and dispositions; as these are good, their peace and comfort are strong; as

bad, they wither and decline. The best endeavours to please; the most sacred institution, if trusted in, prove no better than a temporary gourd, soon grown and soon withered.

God will by no means have creatures dignified with any dignity besides that with which he himself is pleased to invest them. He hath purposed to stain the pride of all flesh, and to lay creature glory low in the dust. He will teach his people, how stubborn soever, to obey; and however much attached to creature delights, to live upon himself. He is determined to have all the glory of his people's dependance and support, and has therefore prepared a worm at the root of every gourd, in which they are apt to place their trust, and from whence they derive a temporary delight: so that by blasting their gourds, he may bring them to delight in himself, and take up their rest under the shadow of his Almighty wings. Hence all the afflictions, losses, temptations, and crosses of the Lord's people; for these come not by chance; they spring not of themselves out of the dry ground; they are kindly ordained, to promote the divine life in your souls, and to foster them up for heaven, the inheritance to which they are predestinated.

There being then a worm prepared at the root of every gourd, and, as a late author* observes, a crook in every lot, it may now be expedient to point out to my reader, a certain antidote against the poison of this canker worm, which is the

III. Thing to be attended to. In general one would suppose, were we not acquainted with the plague of man's depraved heart, that the following things would be antidote sufficient, if properly attended to.

1. The vanity, emptiness, and uncertainty of worldly riches. They seldom serve for any other purpose to the proprietor, besides puffing him up with a fond opinion of his own importance, and indulging him in gratifying his vain ambition, of lording it over those whom Providence has put off with a more scanty measure, of what the world calls good. The very owner finds them empty, even in the enjoyment. All that he has, still leaves room for more; and every new gratification leaves the soul empty. Nor are they more certain than satisfactory; for they make to themselves wings and flee away; flee away never to return;

* Boston on Divine Sovereignty.

flee away so as to leave nothing behind them, but the sad remembrance that they were once enjoyed. How much better to be interested in heavenly riches, than to enjoy those that are only temporary.

2. All temporal honours vanish in the grave, where distinctions are no longer known. There the mitred prelate is reduced to a level with the country curate of 20*l. per annum.* The imperial monarch lays down his head on a level with the starved beggar; and the finest lady is no higher than the village damsel, unless indeed she obtain this sorry pre-eminence; "to rot in state."* All are dust; all shall return to dust, through the way of nauseous putrefaction. No art nor care can possibly evade that dire, tremendous sentence, "Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return."

3. God unites natural relations, not in an indissoluble, but in a dissolvible relation; all gourds of this kind grow up intentionally to wither. Therefore those that are married ought to be as though they were not married. And those that have children, as though they had none. Children in particular are certain cares, and but very uncertain comforts; given to be taken away, and very often better taken away than spared. So that God has written *vanity* on every creature delight; and he that tries the whole circle of creature enjoyments most, shall find them to be but vexation of spirit. A truth, to which my judgment readily subscribes, but to which my affections can hardly be won to submit. Though bruised in a mortar with a pestal amongst wheat, like Solomon's fool, yet does not my foolishness depart from me.

But something more effectual than these considerations, pertinent as they may be, may yet be proposed. Not, indeed, under the notion of a gourd, but of a stable oak, which can withstand the most violent tempest. Not a shrub of a dwarfish stature, but a tall cedar, which overtops every hazy cloud, and lifts itself above the convulsions of the atmosphere. Not an empty shadow like that of Jonah's gourd, but a substantial and ever-during shadow, under which you may with pleasure and safety take your everlasting repose. My God, may this shadow be my only refuge for ever and ever! May my soul desire no sanctuary

* Blair on the Grave.

but this! From this alone may I derive all my enjoyments! In this alone have perpetual delight.

1. The love of God, the free spontaneous and sovereign love, in which he himself externally rests, with ineffable complacency, may well be understood as a suitable, a safe, and permanent rest for his people. This is very far from being like Jonah's gourd, the leaves of which could break the intense rays of the sun, and the streaming east wind, but very partially from his temporary booth. This is as walls of salvation on every quarter, a shield encompassing round about, leaving no avenue open, no place unguarded. Hence he that dwelleth in this secret place shall abide continually under the shadow of the Almighty, (Psal. xci. 1.) and there be safe for ever and ever.

Jonah's gourd was vulnerable even to the stroke of a worm; but all the power of the old dragon, all the venom of complicated guiltiness could not make the least impression on the love of Jehovah. This effectually secures its dependants from all that, with any propriety, may be called evil; this engages, in behalf of its refugees, every person, every perfection of deity.

Jonah's gourd was of short duration; it sprang up in one night, and withered in another. A fit and striking emblem of the Arminian representation of the love of God to mankind as suspended on certain conditions, to be by them performed; and which springs up in a night when they obey, and withers in a night when they fail in their performances. But the love of God is from everlasting to everlasting, immutably the same, without beginning or end, incapable of decay. So he says himself, Jer. xxxi. 3. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love;" *i. e.* with a love that had no beginning, according to the primary sense of the word; with a love that shall never end; for that which shall have, or may have end, can with no propriety be called everlasting.

2. The obedience, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the sinner's substitute, is the shadow of a great rock, and not of a feeble gourd. Broad and extensive to furnish room for every comer; hence himself declares, "That of all that come to him he will nowise cast out." Upon no consideration whatever; if even as vile as polluted Magdalene, and as guilty as bloody Manasseh. Why should he, seeing

that yet there is room under his salutary shadow; room for all, that shall seek life and salvation through his name? To turn away a poor perishing sinner, calling on him for salvation, would argue a want of room under his shadow to hide from danger; of power in his arm to save from destruction; of virtue in his blood to atone and cleanse; and of merit in his righteousnes to justify; which never can be the case with him whose works are all perfection.

It was under this reviving shadow the longing spouse sat down with such great delight," Cant. ii. 3. "She sat down there, to take up her final abode. She found him to be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, a place of refuge, a covert from the storm and from rain," Isa. iv. 6. With equal pleasure and delight does the believer sit under the covert of the Redeemer's blood and righteousness, when he can see his sins blotted out as a cloud, and as a thick cloud his iniquities. His person justified freely from all things, delivered from condemnation to all eternity, entitled to the felicity of heaven and glory. No heart but his own, can conceive the reviving delights experienced in these halcyon days of nearness to Jesus, whose delightsome shadow spreads vigour through the whole soul, and gives life and health to the countenance.

Far from being like our own obedience and goodness of frame, which is like the passing cloud; the virtue of this is everlastingly effectual, from the beginning to the end. Under this life-giving shadow, the patriarchs and prophets rested with as much security as the modern believer does. What it was to believers in the apostolic days, it is to us now; and what it is to us, it will be to all comers, even to the end of time.

Cease then, O believer; cease from temporary gourds. Call back thy wandering affections from transitory objects, and sit down with the spouse under the shadow of thy only Lord and Saviour. Here is rest, peace, and pleasure; here is everlasting and ever-growing delight; but in the world all is uncertainty, all is disappointment. No happiness, no lasting satisfaction is to be expected, but in a living entirely upon Jesus, as our delightful portion, as well as all-sufficient Saviour from sin, and its tremendous consequences. Whoever, therefore, desires refined delight and happiness without a sting, let him turn in hither, turn

in under this adorable shadow, for yet there is room. Room even for you, how vile, how wicked soever you have been; how loathsome, how desperately wicked soever you may find the present frame of your hearts to be.

To you, O men, I call; and my voice is to those whose hearts are carried away by the things that are seen; who conceive of no higher felicity than that arising from sensual gratification. Your trust, alas! is placed in fruitless gourds; your pleasantest morsel is but the food of swine. Shall I prevail with you, as rational beings, a little to reflect on your situation? Get the whole world in all its imaginary excellencies, what will it profit you without an interest in the love of God? Hell was not the less hot and dreadful to departed Dives, on account of his having died a rich man, and because his carcass was rotting in state.

If the world has your hearts, you are of it, and being of it, what can you expect but to perish with it? for it, and all its lovers, are doomed to destruction, from which none can rescue. Dreadful beyond conception must be the death of the worldling, robbed of all upon which his heart was set, of all which he deemed valuable and worth his attention. Death robs, without remorse or pity, the rich man of his wealth, the ambitious of his honours, and the voluptuary of his every pleasure; lodges them all where darkness and despair for ever triumph. On the other hand, what felicity must death be to the saint, the sinner, whose only dependance is Jesus? It takes off every yoke, and unbinds every fetter. It frees him from every thing that may properly be called evil; and puts him in possession of all that is good and desirable.

One thing, and only one seems indispensably requisite to true happiness; and that one thing, whatever it be, must be of a durable nature, must be such as will bear the dependance of the needy, of the weary spirit. The apostles could be happy without possessing silver and gold: the worthies, celebrated by the author to the Hebrews, could be happy, though clothed in sheep's skins and in goats' skins, though their best apartments were the dens and caves of the unworthy earth, and though all mankind were their enemies. Happy because God was their Trust, and Christ was their Salvation. An interest in the blessed Immanuel, possession of the divine life, knowledge of the loving-kindness of

our God and Maker, are necessary to our living comfortably and dying with triumph; necessary to our well being in this and in the future world. Without these we had better been strangled in the birth, or dropped into the grave from our mothers' breasts; better that we had never been brought into existence; for who amongst us, alas! can dwell with devouring flames? Who can endure everlasting burnings; as all must do who die strangers to Christ and his salvation? But to be born of the Spirit, to be converted by grace, implies a right and title to every immunity of the children, every blessing of a well-ordered covenant; secures to the soul the possession of durable riches and righteousness; secures the administration of an entrance into the joys of paradise, and a mansion in heaven, where there are pleasures for evermore.

END OF VOL. I.

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